MODERN REVIEW

VOLUME III. NUMBER I SUMMER, 1949

THE HERO AS POLITICIAN
Gertrude Himmelfarb 3

THE DYNAMICS OF MARXISM
Bert Hoselitz 11

THE RIGHTS OF MAN
Hannah Arendt 24

THE ISRAELI COMMUNE
Ben Halpern 38

NATIONALITIES IN RUSSIA
Solomon M. Schwarz 53

SOME RECENT ATTEMPTS AT "MEANING"
Paul Kecskemeti 71

SOVIET CRIME AND PUNISHMENT
Julius Margolin 80

Modern Review, a quarterly, is published by the American Labor Conference on International Affairs at 7 East 15th Street, New York 3, N. Y. Subscription: $3.00 a year; single copy 80 cents. Canada and other foreign countries, $4.00 a year. All payments from foreign countries must be made by U. S. money orders or by checks payable in U. S. currency or 75¢ added for collection charges. Manuscripts are invited. They should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Signed contributions do not necessarily represent the policy of *Modern Review.* Copyright, 1948, by the American Labor Conference on International Affairs. Application for entry as second-class matter is pending.

Editors

RAPHAEL ABRAMOVITCH DANIEL BELL

Contributing Editors

JOHN L. CHILDS SIDNEY HOOK

BERTRAM D. WOLFE

Associate Editor

RAYMOND ROSENTHAL

In Forthcoming Issues of 'Modern Review'

DANIEL BELL—*The Mass Society*

NATHAN GLAZER—*The Theory of Class in Current U. S. Sociology*

WILLIAM GOMBERG—*The Myth of "The Engineer"*

FELIX GROSS—*Planning—Habits and Values*

SIDNEY HOOK—*What Is Ideology?*

BERNARD WOLFE—*"The Negro as He Really Is": Reflex and Falseface in Popular Culture*

PAUL KECSKEMETI—*Ideology and Class Consciousness*

CHRISTIAN LEWALTER—*Marxian Philosophy—From Hegel to Stalin*

JACOB TAUBES—*Meaning in History*

BERTRAM D. WOLFE—*The Planning Idea in Russia*

KARL WITTFOGEL—*Oriental Bureaucracy*

BORIS SAPIR—*Trends in the European Labor Movement*

THE HERO AS POLITICIAN

Edmund Burke: Rhetoric and Reality

By Gertrude Himmelfarb

CARLYLE'S HERO appeared in many incarnations—as god, king, prophet, priest, even as philosopher, poet and man of letters; the one form he did not allow to him was that of politician. The mission of the hero was to reveal the "divine idea of the world," a vocation to which the politician, as Carlyle saw him, did not aspire. Later generations contemplated with satisfaction their emancipation from Carlyle's heroes, and took pleasure in first humiliating and then discarding them. But hardly had men rid themselves of these heroes before another was insinuated into their midst, and he was the one Carlyle had not admitted, the hero as politician. To Carlyle this would be a classic instance of straining at the gnat and swallowing the camel. For the politician has all the moral disabilities of the others with none of their virtues. Pretending to no eternal ideas or divine truths, he revels in the profane. Yet it is his genius to assume at will the mask of king, poet or philosopher as it pleases him, and he has even been known to appear to some in the likeness of a god.

Only this extraordinary facility for disguise, combined with an obscurity or ambiguity of character, can account for the high esteem Edmund Burke has enjoyed among so many thoughtful men of different persuasions, and the veneration he has inspired among Whigs and Tories (Macaulay judged him the greatest man since Milton, and Disraeli spoke of his "divine effusions"), self-confessed socialists (to Harold Laski he is England's greatest political thinker), and devout and learned Catholics. Moorhouse F. X. Millar, a Jesuit and professor at Fordham University, has described Burke as "the greatest philosopher-statesman thus far known to history," and because Father Millar, if not Burke, aspires to a rigid consistency and orthodoxy, he has also pronounced him "the last of the great scholastics." Ross Hoffman and Paul Levack, both of Fordham and editors of the most recent volume of selections from

Burke,* agree with their colleague in finding Burke to be a repository of all the social principles of Thomism, a "fountain of wisdom" capable of creating in the desert of modern society a moral and political oasis.

While Catholics revere Burke as a pious defender of the natural and divine order, secularists praise him for his boldly empirical attitude to politics; liberals derive from him a philosophy of political pluralism intended to prevent statism and tyranny, and conservatives take comfort in his theory of the organic state and his paeans to authority. It is no wonder that his speeches are used as texts in rhetoric for high school students, for what they lack in logical rigor they must make up in persuasiveness. Goldsmith once said that Burke in conversation was like a serpent winding around his subject—and, it might be added, he cared as little as the serpent where he attacked or how; the important thing was that the attack succeeded. It was left for his commentators to decide what were his purpose and motives, and what were mere devices of strategy and tactics. The fact that he holds the undisputed title of supreme rhetorician in a country distinguished for its rhetoric explains the confusions of Catholics and secularists, liberals and conservatives.

For every citation, in the introduction by Hoffman and Levack, demonstrating what they regard as Burke's submission to "the universal natural law of reason and justice ordained by God as the foundation of a good community," there are two quotations in the biography by John Morley and half a dozen in the works of Burke himself conclusively establishing his contempt for theories of natural law and abstract, absolute values. It is not only the metaphysicians of the French Revolution but all metaphysicians who fall victim to his facile pen: "Nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thoroughbred metaphysician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit than to the frailty and passion of a man. It is like that of the Principle of Evil himself, incorporeal, pure, unmixed, dephlegmated, defecated evil." There are a host of similar harangues against philosophers and theorists who would confound questions of practical politics with abstract principles of morality and metaphysical distinctions of right,

---

* *Burke's Politics: Selected Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke on Reform, Revolution, and War.* New York, Knopf, 1949. $4.75.

of which Burke said that he hated "the very sound of them." The characteristic words in his vocabulary, providing a refrain for every speech he delivered and every pamphlet he composed, were: convenience, expedience, prudence and accommodation; everything else he jeered at as the "delusive plausibilities of moral politicians."

PHILOSOPHY WAS hateful because, however well-intentioned its practitioners, the very discipline of thinking—to say nothing of philosophical thinking, the examination of first causes and ultimate reasons—was by nature dangerous. To Burke, prejudice and superstition were infinitely preferable to reason, for what reason tends to uproot, prejudices and superstition keep fast: "Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit, and not a series of unconnected acts; through just prejudice his duty becomes a part of his nature." Civil society coud not subsist long if all men were philosophers. Subordination, not independence, was necessary for the human mind. Burke had more in common with Rousseau than either would have liked to think. Both looked upon science and philosophy in general, and the Enlightenment in particular, as the great peril to society, and Burke should have been the first to agree with Rousseau that "the development of enlightenment and vice always takes place in the same ratio, not in the individuals, but in the people." (Leo Strauss, in *Social Research,* December 1947, brilliantly exposes the "praise of ignorance" that governs so much of Rousseau's thinking.) The difference between Rousseau and Burke, contrary to the general impression fostered by Burke himself, was not in method but in ends; where Rousseau was solicitous of a future democratic state, Burke was interested only in making impregnable the existing aristocratic state.

Like another uncongenial predecessor, Hobbes, with whom he would have been quick to deny any affinity, Burke could have said that he and fear were born, as twins, together. But while Hobbes boasted of the relationship publicly and made the most of it, exalting fear, the fear of war and disorder, to the highest position in his philosophical system, Burke permitted it to enjoy only an illegitimate existence in the shady recesses of his mind, from which it emerged now and then, sometimes defiantly, sometimes quietly, almost without his knowledge. Thus he pleaded that England submit to the demands of America, not

because America had right or law or liberty on its side, but because the discontent in the colonies threatened the order and government of England and the rest of the empire; for "whether liberty be advantageous or not, . . . none will dispute that peace is a blessing." On the other hand, it was the duty of Britain to engage in a crusade against France to extirpate the ideas and principles of the revolution which threatened to create a "universal ferment," a "decomposition of society." This fear of disorder pursued Burke so far as to convince him that liberty could be acceptable, as long as it was "liberty with order." Tell me, he requested, what provisions have been made for government, public force, armies, the revenue, property, peace and order, civil and social manners, and I will judge whether the new liberty of France is a good or an evil. (Somewhere in this enumeration appear morality and religion, but these, like manners, are only euphemisms for order.) The English constitution, which he cherished so dearly that he could not bring himself to entertain the most modest proposal for reform of the suffrage or of representation of the boroughs, fixed the order of society as well and as permanently as human arrangements could be fixed, and to tamper with them, he was certain, would open the floodgates to chaos. When it was proposed to substitute triennial parliaments for the traditional septennial ones, he warned that the change would have the following ill effects: it would make the members of parliament shamelessly, shockingly corrupt and would bankrupt those with fortunes, it would make the electorate infinitely more venal and the whole body of the people, within and outside of the electorate, lawless, idle and debauched; in short, it "would utterly destroy the sobriety, the industry, the integrity, the simplicity of all the people, and undermine, I am much afraid, the deepest and best-laid foundations of the commonwealth."

If Burke's rhetoric sometimes obscures the straight line of his thoughts, it often helps trace that line. Single words—liberty, justice, people—shift meaning too rapidly in the eloquent flow of his speech, but his metaphors exhibit a remarkable consistency of tone and subject. The vision is one of impending danger, as when he describes the prudent politician devoted to the security and peace of his government, who scans the political sky to discover the hurricane in a cloud no

bigger than a hand at the very edge of the horizon, and who quickly guides his vessel into the nearest harbor. The constitution is pictured as standing "on a nice equipoise, with steep precipices and deep waters upon all sides of it," so that when men seek to correct a leaning to one side, they risk upsetting it on the other. And when the constitution is not precariously poised on high, it is an island surrounded by raging seas.

WHERE HOBBES feared everyone indiscriminately, on the theory that all men were driven by the same sense of insecurity and insatiable lust for power, Burke, like Machiavelli, feared only those who were deprived of effective governing power, and who, presumably, would risk everything to get at the sources of power. Compared with Burke, Hobbes was an exemplary democrat: he assigned to all men the same instincts, distrusted all for the same reasons, and thought of civil society as profiting all men equally. However faulty the schemes for promoting the general welfare, however unpersuasive or distasteful his theory of absolute sovereignty, Hobbes did at least have a conception of the general welfare which genuinely comprised all men. Burke, more practical, more conventional and less visionary than Hobbes, had a more modest sense of his task. If happiness and security were not the lot of all, he thought it only proper that they be enjoyed by at least the privileged few. It would not help the lower classes, it might even work to their disadvantage, to upset the traditional order of society. In place of the confusing, illogical and irresponsible doctrine of the rights of man, Burke urged that men reconcile themselves to the realities of social existence, to the fact that government has authority only by virtue of prescription and presumption—the prescription of ancient conventions and sanctions, and the presumption that what exists must and should exist. Philosophy and speculation are at best supererogatory, at worst pernicious. "That which might be wrong in the beginning," Burke wrote, "is consecrated by time and becomes lawful. I had rather remain in ignorance and superstition than be enlightened and purified out of the first principles of law and natural justice." It was for this reason, too, that he was partial to religion, even religion tinctured with superstition, for "religion is the basis of civil society" and "superstition is the religion of feeble minds." This also partly explains his benevolent

feeling for Catholicism, "the most effectual barrier" against Jacobinism. Any established religion, however, served his purpose, for all the European religions were "prescriptive religions"; "they have all stood long enough to make prescription and its chain of legitimate prejudices their main stay."

Prescription and presumption were, of course, admirably suited to the interests of the English aristocracy, and it is strange to find so many commentators of Burke, including Hoffman and Levack, soberly defend the thesis that Burke, the employee of the most aristocratic faction of the Whig party, "stood for government of the people (with their consent), by the people (through the instrumentality of their natural representatives), and for the people (for their common and permanent good, but not for their vagrant and variant whims)." It is not even necessary to quibble about how "their consent" might be construed, considering the fact that they had no opportunity to express or withhold it. Burke himself made no serious pretense to speak for the people. He was proud that his was the most aristocratic party in England, "connected with the solid, permanent, long-possessed property of the country." And he realized, better perhaps than modern readers who delicately refrain from vulgar imputations of economic motives, that the essence of aristocracy was property, and the genius of the system of prescription, as of inheritance, was that it "leaves acquisition free; but it secures what it acquires." "The means of acquisition are prior in time and in arrangement" to government, he argued, and acquisition is secure only when the people are "tractable and obedient," when the authority of the magistrate and the law are unquestioned, and when those who have failed in the struggle for acquisition are not tempted to rebel against their "natural subordination." "They must respect that property of which they cannot partake. They must labor to obtain what by labor can be obtained; and when they find, as they commonly do, the success disproportioned to the endeavor, they must be taught their consolation in the final proportions of eternal justice."

ROBERT MAYNARD HUTCHINS, who, it may be supposed, would have been pleased to find in Burke those principles of liberty, morality and social justice that Hoffman and Levack find in

him, felt obliged to report, in an article in the *Thomist,* that every kindly reference by Burke to "the people" was more than compensated for by a consistent, undeviating solicitude for the propertied class. At the start of the French Revolution, Burke calculated the number of landed proprietors in France at 70,000, and remarks: "I am sure that if half that number of the same description were taken out of this country, it would leave hardly anything that I should call the people of England." Elsewhere, in a more generous temper, he estimated that those who, "in any political view," could be called the people amounted to 400,000 in England and Wales (of a population of eight or nine million). Burke's was not even the normal conservatism of the eighteenth century Whig. The majority of the Whig party, feeling secure in its power, could complacently suggest minor reforms in the franchise, but Burke was consumed by a fear bordering on hysteria, and the most innocent proposal for liberalizing the state evoked images of mass expropriation and murder. If there were to be any constitutional changes, he pleaded, they ought to be in the direction of reducing, rather than increasing, the number of voters.

There has been a curious levelling of academic controversy in recent years. Political philosophers have borrowed from each other so liberally that there are only differences of emphasis rather than of categories to distinguish them. They no longer quarrel about the merits of political pluralism; they only compete for the honor of having originated it. The old arguments about the organic versus the atomistic state have peacefully given way to the idea of a corporative society. The utilitarian theory of self-interest has been discovered to be not inconsistent with a theory of social purpose and value. The concept of the tyranny of the majority is as respectable as the concept of democracy, and not uncongenial to it. Secularists have been impressed with the urgency of faith, and religious thinkers tend to be, if anything, too receptive to the efficiency gospel of the technocrats. The virtues of tradition, history and constitutions, the fact of the complexities of human nature and social arrangements, the notion of the uses and abuses of power and of the extent and limit of intelligence, are commonplace in all philosophical parties. Machiavelli and Hobbes no longer excite apprehension or Rousseau derision, Marx and Augustine are associated in a

single eschatalogical tradition, and people are no longer born to be either Platonists or Aristotelians. A bland tolerance characterizes most academic inquiries in political philosophy—an atmosphere particularly favorable to the enhancement of Burke's reputation.

It is easy enough for the political pluralist to forget that Burke had the heretical idea of the state as "a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection." The moralist can ignore Burke's idealization of the past and his identification of what is with what ought to be. The hard-headed realist manages to gloss over Burke's fanciful flight of rhetoric in describing the captivating beauty and innocence of Marie Antoinette and the charms of an age of chivalry in passages reminiscent of the magnolia-and-old-South school of writing. When liberals finally came to admit that conservatism might be a store-house of political wisdom, they settled upon Burke as the arbiter of politics and morality.

But the insights of conservatism might have been more readily found in a Metternich, who did not delude himself into believing that his aristocracy was the natural, eternal ruler of the universe; or a Tocqueville, for whom the march of democracy was a necessary, if fatal, event in history; or a Burckhardt, who boldly announced that salvation lay not in a tenacious grasp upon property, but in the rejection of a vulgarized, mass-minded, materialistic and industrial society; or an Acton, who set absolute morality against history, democracy and even religion; or a Carlyle, who searched for the soul of the world's history in the souls of great men.

THE DYNAMICS OF MARXISM
What Remains Valid?

By Bert Hoselitz

IN THE period from the middle of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth centuries, Western European society underwent a profound change. Externally this change manifested itself in the appearance of factories and large scale industry, the rapid growth of cities, the development of new means of transport, and the progressive mechanization of human life in general. The admiration for these great works of engineering was widespread and profound. Arthur Young waxed enthusiastic over the art of canal building; poems were written in praise of coal mines, textile mills, iron foundries, and steam engines.[1] But to almost all men of the time the inner workings of the society in which they lived remained hidden in the same degree that its outward achievements impressed themselves on their senses.

True, men like Robert Owen, Simonde de Sismondi, Thomas Sadler, and Lord Shaftesbury keenly felt the abysmal wretchedness and misery of large masses of workers amidst the new industrial wealth. But although they perceived the paradox that poverty increased simultaneously with growing riches, they looked for palliatives of the worst evils of industrialism. At the same time, the men who lived in closest contact with the working poor, who observed first hand how the bodies of children and the personalities of young people and adults became stunted in the process of machine production, regarded these conditions as the inevitable consequence of the poor man's lack of prudence and "moral restraint." They saw that in the competitive struggle they had to reduce their costs of production to the utmost, and if their workers lived a life of misery and intermittent starvation, the fault was not with any contradictions of a system whose harmoniousness was praised by such men as Nassau W. Senior and Frederic Bastiat, but was due to the inexorable working of the Malthusian devil and

[1] Examples of this literature are given by Francis D. Klingender, *Art and the Industrial Revolution,* New York, 1947, pp. 12-38.

profligacy, improvidence, and dissipation on the part of the workers themselves.

However, when the disharmonies and antagonisms of the social system appeared in full relief, the attempt to analyze critically the system, its advent and prospects began. Although several attempts at such analysis were made, the most successful and, indeed, the outstanding achievement of this task is found in the work of Karl Marx. He succeeded where others failed chiefly because of his training in Hegelian philosophy, which caused him to look at the society of his time not as something that had come to stay, but as constituting only a transient phase in the history of mankind. Unlike his predecessors and most of his contemporaries, who attempted to establish universally valid propositions about the relationships of socially and economically relevant variables, Marx saw that such an attempt was doomed to failure and that the institutions of society had to be interpreted historically. For this reason it became, however, necessary to isolate and examine the characteristic features of the social system of his day, and this task, of laying bare "the economic law of motion of modern society"[2] in which Marx was engaged for the major part of his life, resulted in the first thoroughgoing and authoritative study of capitalism. Marx's description of the basic features of capitalism are too well known to require elaborate restatement. But since we will refer to them in the course of this essay, they may be listed briefly and dogmatically.

(1) A precondition of capitalism is the development of productive forces to a level where commodity production, *i.e.,* production for exchange is possible.

(2) The characteristic feature of the economic base of capitalism consists in the fact that commodity production is carried on under conditions where "the owner of means of production and subsistence meets in the market with the free labourer selling his labour power. The capitalist epoch is therefore characterized by this, that labour-power takes in the eyes of the labourer himself the form of a commodity which is his property; his labour consequently becomes wage labour."[3]

(3) Capitalist social structure, based on these production relations, is characterized by the division into classes and the struggle of these

[2] Karl Marx, *Capital,* Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co., 1906, Vol. I, p. 14.
[3] *Ibid.,* p. 189.

classes against each other. Although a refined analysis of capitalism yields a multiplicity of classes, the characteristic and overpowering class antagonism under capitalism exists between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

(4) Class antagonism explains at the same time the distribution of power in society. The proposition that "the history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles," resolves itself, with regard to capitalism, into the observation that political (and economic) power is monopolized by the bourgeoisie in order to maintain its economic supremacy and to subdue and exploit the suppressed masses of the proletariat.

THIS ENUMERATION shows that Marx's concepts are essentially dynamic. He was not interested in classification for its own sake, nor was he interested in it as a means of distinguishing the various epochs of economic or social history as such. His concepts are necessarily tools in the task of examining the "development of the social antagonisms that result from the natural law of capitalist production."[4] In terms of the vast dialectic triad in which Marx saw the development of human history, his view of the place of capitalism may be summed up in the following way.

The thesis corresponds to the period of genuine private property, when no exploitation and no classes exist. This form of society has been designated as "classless individualism" or as "primitive communism," a term drawn by Marx and Engels from the work of Lewis H. Morgan. The antithesis—or negation of the thesis—is a society divided into classes, in which, by exploiting the suppressed class, the ruling class appropriates part of the social product in the form of surplus value. This epoch of human history is itself divided into different periods; despotic slave society, feudalism, and capitalism—periods distinguished from each other by the precise form and character of exploitation and class struggle. The first two stages of class society represent the frank negation of the thesis; while in the last stage of class society, under capitalism, there appears the negation of the negation, the proletariat composed of free laborers, which constitutes at the same time the destructive force within the antithesis and the means through which the synthesis, a classless communistic society, will be achieved.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

It is not surprising that such a vast scheme of social development presents some inaccuracies and rough spots. The central concept in Marx's picture of capitalist society is the cleavage between classes. Thus he assumes that social mobility upwards is impossible, or at any rate, exceptional, that political power is concentrated wholly in the hands of the bourgeoisie, and that economic power is tied to ownership of the means of production. All three of these points have been challenged as requiring modificaton and re-examination in the light of more modern developments.

The explanation of the functioning of capitalist economy—the theory of exploitation of labor and appropriation of surplus value—is based on the assumption that wage workers and capitalists (or receivers of surplus value) are strictly separated, that is, in non-Marxian terms, they are non-competing groups. This implies the absence of class mobility. In examining the history of capitalism we can observe, however, that facility of inter-class mobility followed a cycle.

In the early stages of capitalism, mobility upwards was relatively easy; it became more and more difficult as the 19th century proceeded, that is, before the corporation became the usual form of capitalist enterprise. But with the widespread introduction of corporate organization and the replacement of the owner-entrepreneur by the hired manager, the rigidities in the class structure relaxed. Simultaneous with this process the function of property changed, and whereas at an earlier stage ownership and control of means of production were, for all practical purposes, identical, they must be sharply distinguished since the rise of corporate enterprise.

It is not difficult to prove that the initial impact of capitalism was attended by a loosening of class rigidities, while its eventual victory meant the simultaneous disintegration of the old social ties. The feudal world was characterized by many rigorous group ties; the strongest among them were perhaps the guilds. The first victims of advancing capitalism were manorial and guild organizations; and with increasing secularization of life, religious brotherhoods and other communal organizations began to disintegrate. This process of dissolving the old-established groups in the course of time also led to the gradual disintegration of the

family. At first the family ceased to be a unit of production; later it lost almost all of its other earlier functions. Whereas in the nineteenth century it had still been an economic unit through which property was administered and passed on from generation to generation, the modern family has less and less this function. This process of family disintegration on the one hand contributes to the greater social mobility in modern capitalism, but on the other hand makes the analysis of a social structure in which exclusive emphasis is placed on class relations rather tenuous.

THE SLOGAN under which capitalism became victorious was "freedom": freedom from the rigid status organization of the Middle Ages, freedom from the monopolistic restrictions of the guild system, freedom from the economic and social disabilities which had been established on the basis of religion. The realization of these freedoms was a high degree of social mobility introducing a class of *nouveaux riches,* men who chiefly by their own efforts had risen from the rural and urban working classes. Only a very small number of the new industrialists came from the old moneyed or trading class, or from the aristocracy. Although reliable statistics for this period are lacking, the biographies of many early industrialists show that a large proportion of them came from families of small artisans, peasants or laborers.[5]

As the nineteenth century progressed, mobility was undoubtedly reduced—at any rate, in the older industrial countries of Europe. Whereas in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the possession of a "venturesome spirit" and of intelligence had been of at least equal, if not greater, importance than the possession of funds for investment for a man wishing to become an industrial entrepreneur, this was not true after the middle of the nineteenth century. In the period immediately following the Reform bill, serious rigidities in the class structure developed and the only possible escape from a life of permanent wage slavery which was open to a fortunate few, was emigration to a new

[5] An attempt to trace the social origins of German industrial capitalists in the early nineteenth century has been undertaken by Henry Witt in a very able doctor's dissertation, submitted to the University of Hamburg. Witt's researches show that in Germany also the majority of successful industrial entrepreneurs came from the lower levels of the social order. See Henry Witt, *Die Triebkrafte des industriellen Unternehmertums vor* 100 *Jahren und heute,* Hamburg, 1929, pp. 30-92.

continent. Factory legislation, so heartily damned by the radical liberal bourgeoisie as restraining the free operation of market forces, legislation on public health and education, the measures of social policy encountered in late nineteenth century Britain and extended even further in Bismarckian Germany—all arose out of a faint awareness on the part of the rulers that social mobility was severely restricted. This legislation was a token payment by the ruling groups toward social "emancipation,"—an attempt at preserving the established power relations by creating quasi-privileges for the unprivileged—dispelling in this way the most telling arguments of the agitators for a new social order. That this was the aim of the "social legislation" in Germany under Bismarck was generally recognized, and nobody recognized this more clearly than Friedrich Engels.[6] Thus, in Marx's and Engels' day it was true that the classes were, on the whole, separated from each other by iron boundaries, and that property and the economic power to exploit the laborer were closely bound up with each other.

But in truly dialectic fashion the forces which destroyed this stage of capitalist society were developing. These forces may be designated by the term "association." In the field of industrial organization there arose the corporation which progressively led to a separation of property and economic control; in the field of labor relations there arose the trades union which progressively modified the form and degree of exploitation of the worker; in agriculture and small scale commerce there arose the co-operative which gave a new lease of life to small-scale competitive or quasi-competitive enterprise in the face of intensified concentration and monopolization. The difference between this associative type of capitalism and the old system of competitive atomism is profound.[7]

Marx was, of course, not unaware of this process of association, notably of the development of the corporation as the dominant form of industrial enterprise. His views on corporations are set forth in the third volume of *Capital* in outline form and, at best, give us hints of what

---

[6] See Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State,* Chicago, Charles H. Kerr & Co., 1902, p. 209.

[7] One of the main points raised by Eduard Bernstein in support of his "revision" of Marxism is his insistence on this associative nature of capitalism. However, Bernstein overstates his case in that he makes virtually all class antagonisms disappear. See Eduard Bernstein, *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Socialdemokratie,* Stuttgart, 1899, pp. 04-117.

his analysis of this form of enterprise might have been.[8] Apart from a series of acute observations on the specifically economic aspects of corporations, Marx comes to the following conclusions: (1) Since the corporation represents not an individual but an associated capital, it "is the abolition of capital as private property within the boundaries of capitalist production itself." Thus the corporation represents a "self-destructive contradiction . . . within capitalism itself . . . a mere phase of transition to a new form of production." (2) Moreover, it transforms "the actually functioning capitalist into a mere manager, an administrator of other people's capital, and . . . the owners of capital into mere owners, mere money-capitalists."[9] As descriptions of a predominantly corporate form of capitalism, Marx's observations display his usual insight and brilliance; but no conclusions are drawn as to resulting modifications in the structure of and cleavages within the bourgeoisie. James Burnham is so impressed by this division between function and ownership that he sees capitalism replaced by a new form of society, the "managerial society." This view is too extreme. Even corporate capitalism has the distinguishing features of capitalism, though the social structure of corporate or monopoly capitalism is different from the relatively less complex structure of competitive atomistic capitalism of the early nineteenth century.

ONE DIFFERENCE is the increased inter-class mobility which accompanies the rise of monopoly capitalism. Although the possession of wealth was not unimportant, initiative, intelligence, and a fair degree of scrupulousness were significant personality factors facilitating the rise to a managerial position. In this respect, the origins of corporate capitalism display similarities with the rise of early industrialism. In a well-known study by F. W. Taussig and C. S. Joslyn, it was shown that almost 51 per cent of the business leaders in America came from business families and that about 30 per cent were the sons of major executives and large owners.[10] Less than 30 per cent came from labor, farm, or lower

[8] These passages in chapter 27 of the third volume of *Capital* (pp. 516 ff. in the American translation), have variously been quoted in support of contradictory positions. They are evidence of the often repeated fact that almost anything can be proved by reference to passages in Marx.

[9] All these passages are cited from *Capital*, Vol. III, pp. 516-519.

[10] *American Business Leaders*, New York, 1932. The fipures in the text are taken from pp. 82-100 of this work.

paid white collar families. However, if two groups are selected among the business leaders, those over 60 and those under 40 years of age, the relative proportions are different. These differences are shown in the accompanying table.

	Present Age of Respondent	
Family Background	*Under 40 years of age*	*Over 60 years of age*
Labor, Farm, Clerk	19.0%	34.0%
Business	67.8%	50.3%
Professional	13.2%	15.7%

Allowing for bias on behalf of the respondents to Taussig and Joslyn's enquiry and for inaccuracies resulting from the rather crude statistical methods employed, the difference in the social background of the business leaders less than one generation apart are of such a magnitude as to support the proposition that mobility into the managerial "class" is becoming more difficult. Similar tendencies are also observable in European countries.[11] Hence, it may not be inappropriate to draw the conclusion that associative capitalism follows a similar pattern to early individualistic capitalism as concerns the progressively increasing rigidity of class relations. Yet the analogy is far from complete. One important factor accounting for the difference is the progressive disintegration of the family as a unit through which property and social status is passed on from generation to generation. Another factor is the greater complexity of power relations in monopoly capitalism, producing antagonisms within the traditional classes and alliances between subgroups belonging to different classes.

At the same time, it would be wrong to assume that as ownership and control of the means of production become increasingly separated, the fundamental nature of capitalism as defined by Marx changes to such an extent that we must regard the modern social order as something entirely new and different. For, in spite of this separation between function and ownership, the acquisition of a sufficiently large block of stock nevertheless conveys control over a multiplied amount of capital. Moreover, by the device of interlocking directorates—which amounts to a strategic distribution of property in the form of blocks of stock in a series of related corporate fields—the centralization of capital is

[11] For Germany, see Witt, *op. cit.*, pp. 113 ff.

furthered not only technologically through the increase of the size of the plant, but also in an economic and organizational sense.

But the result of all these trends has been a multiplication of classes and the appearance of antagonisms between sections of society which previously have been absent or at least exceptional. It is not possible any more to speak of the bourgeoisie or of the proletariat as single classes, nor of a class struggle between them as such. A more realistic analysis of the applicability of the Marxian doctrine to the antagonisms of monopoly capitalism requires an examination of Marx's views on power.

As shown earlier, Marx views political power as vested in the ruling class as a whole. Dr. S. H. M. Chang has very assiduously compiled a large number of quotations on the state and state power from the works of Marx and Engels.[12] From the mass of evidence he collected it becomes clear that when Marx and Engels were discussing the role of power *in principle,* they interpreted political power under capitalism to be the exercise of class domination by the bourgeoisie, a function which is virtually identical with the protection of private property. Expressed in other words, this view implies that, in principle, political power is vested in a class and distributed among the members of the class as a whole. Thus, in constructing a general theory of the "state," Marx and Engels disregard power conflicts within a class. With particular reference to the capitalist state, they assume a more or less equal distribution of power and the absence of other than purely temporary antagonisms over the use of power within the bourgeoisie. Similarly, the proletarian state, as bodied forth most clearly in the Paris Commune, was conceived by Marx as a political organization whose power was—and by its nature had to be—spread evenly through the proletariat which was now the ruling class. Among the features of the Commune which Marx emphasizes are the "suppression of the standing army and the substitution for it of the armed people;" the disappearance of the "vested interests and high representation allowances of high dignitaries of the state" and the performance of "public service . . . at *workmen's wages;*" and the destruction of the bureaucracy.[13] Thus, in the proletarian state also,

---

[12] Sherman H. M. Chang, *The Marxian Theory of the State,* Philadelphia, 1931, esp. pp. 46-62.

[13] Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France,* New York, International Publishers, 1933, pp. 40ff. (Italics in original).

power is distributed among the whole proletariat, and power conflicts within the class are ruled out. It is perhaps significant that the official Stalinist doctrine, which has always adapted the teachings of Marx to its own purposes even at the sacrifice of strict orthodoxy, tenaciously adheres to the orthodox Marxian theory of the state. For if it is granted that internal antagonisms are ruled out, that power is evenly distributed among all the members of the ruling class, and that the U.S.S.R. is a proletarian state, then it is proven, on the basis of this very theory of power, that the U.S.S.R. is really the "people's democracy" which the official representatives of Stalinism make it out to be.

BUT TO return to Marx and Engels. When they were discussing not the general theory of power, but concrete historical situations, they implicitly rejected the oversimplified picture stated in pure theory. Marx's analysis of the second French Republic and Engels' analysis of the German peasants' war are but two examples out of many; in each of these an empirical investigation into power relations proved unmistakably that the dogmatic conception of the polarization of power and the absence of power conflicts within the ruling class, was a dangerous oversimplication.

This paradoxical relation between pure theory and practical induction perhaps can be explained as a confusion in terminology. In their theoretical pronouncements on power relations, Marx and Engels always speak of the "state"; in their investigation of concrete historical situations they speak frankly and undisguisedly of power. They knew, of course, that the two concepts—as used by them—were identical. For example, Engels states that "power, the outgrowth of society, but assuming supremacy over it and becoming more and more divorced from it, is the state." At the same time, he recognizes that public officials "assume a position outside and above society," and Marx in discussing the increasing monopolization following the growth of corporative enterprise says that "it challenges the interference of the state," which in this case presumably also stands outside and above society.[14]

Now the exercise of political power cannot be, at the same time, a function of the bourgeoisie and of the state standing above it. The theory

[14] The citations are from Engels, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-208 and from Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 519.

by which the state is regarded as an instrument of the ruling class to maintain power is either a tautology or a statement of such lifeless schematism that it is useless for the empirical study of socio-political relationships. On the other hand, the notion that the state stands "above and outside" society is in full contradiction to the entire conceptual apparatus of Marxian thought which explains social phenomena in terms of identifiable data and events within the social fabric. Both theories, it seems, were born out of the dilemma that an objective, empirical examination of power relations in modern society would lead to a severe modification of the theory of classes on which the Marxian concept of capitalism is founded. Thus Engels says in one place that "at certain periods it occurs *exceptionally* that the struggling classes balance each other so nearly that the public power gains a certain degree of independence by posing as mediator between them." And he quotes as examples in support of this statement the absolute monarchy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Bonapartism of the First and Second Empire, and the "new German empire of Bismarckian make."[15] But far from being exceptions, the examples which he cites cover the larger part of capitalist history. And if Engels lived today, he could have added to his list the fascism of Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco, the history of the New Deal, and certainly also the Stalinist regime in the U.S.S.R.

Thus the Marxian conceptual scheme breaks down in two spots. It does not account adequately for the modifications in the social structure brought about by the progressive evolution of associative capitalism, and it has no usable theory of power by means of which the social and political antagonisms of modern society can be explained.

In spite of these shortcomings, Marx's concept of capitalism is the most useful and fertile of all systematic expositions of capitalism which have come to the attention of this writer. The most respectable, and perhaps the most widely acclaimed alternative is the description of capitalism by Werner Sombart, who, like Marx, made the study of capitalism his life's work. To engage in a critical analysis of Sombart's work in the same detail as has been done with Marx would lead us beyond the scope of this essay, but it may be in order to point to one

[15] Engels, *op cit.*, p. 209 (Italics not in original).

significant difference in the work of Marx, on the one hand, and of Sombart (and Max Weber) on the other.

As was pointed out earlier, Marx's aim in his investigations into modern society was to discover the laws of capitalist dynamics. His concepts are chosen and his generalizations are stated in such a way as to provide a theoretical model by means of which trends of capitalist development can be predicted and policy measures appraised. In spite of its highly theoretical form—which is made more complex by Marx's predilection for the terms of Hegelian dialectics—*Capital* is a work which implements Marx's dictum that what matters is not "to interpret the world, but to change it." It hardly needs to be stressed that Marx developed his concept of capitalism always in terms of his endeavor of providing a theoretical basis for the emancipation of humanity. Although many of his specific predictions did not come true, although he did not and could not foresee the precise developments which were to take place many years after his death, his social and economic theories have had a powerful influence, not only in the area of practical party politics, but also in the field of social science research.[16] The main reason for this is Marx's preoccupation with theory for the sake of practice, his realism, and his scorn of metaphysics and empty categorization for the sake of taxonomy as such. He therefore discovered many important relationships in modern society and, even where he failed, his failure provides a point of departure for others.

SOMBART, on the other hand, is chiefly interested in categorization. The six volumes of his *Der moderne Kapitalismus,* and the many smaller ancillary works supplementing it, are full of assiduously collected data. These facts are classified and their interrelations are described in accordance with the precepts of "scientific" historical methods. But all of Sombart's facts are of little use if one wants to understand the dynamics of capitalist society. Although not stated explicitly by him, his procedure is patterned closely after the methodological scheme introduced by Max Weber. What he is really after is the description of capitalism as an ideal type. His interest is, therefore, primarily taxonomic

[16] An excellent account of the overall influence of Marxian teachings is given by Professor Joseph Schumpeter in the first chapters of his *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy,* New York, 1942.

and his results are useful primarily for the study of succeeding epochs of social and economic history and the history of capitalism itself. Although the usefulness of such knowledge is not denied, it is clear that the concepts developed for the purposes of defining an ideal type, or for the purpose of taxonomy as such, are of a different order than those developed for a theory of social dynamics. To put it in different terms, the generalizations developed by Marx have the purpose of establishing functional relations between significant variables determining the origin and dynamics of a social system; the generalizations developed by Sombart are called forth by his need to categorize in order to discover the proper ingredients of an ideal type.

A conceptualization of capitalism stressing its practical and dynamic aspects is to be preferred to one stressing its historical aspects. Capitalism has ceased to be a thing of interest only to science; like the concept of socialism, it has become a key term in the practical political struggles of the modern world. Marx clearly realized this fact, and shaped his analysis in accordance with it. If his concepts do not take account of the complexities of the present day, it is because he believed that he needed to distinguish capitalism only from feudalism on the one hand and socialism on the other. The proper description of capitalism consists, then, in an extension and modification of the Marxian concepts, building firmly on the base laid by him.

"THE RIGHTS OF MAN" What Are They?

By Hannah Arendt

I

THE RIGHTS of Man, solemnly proclaimed by the French and American revolutions as the new foundation stone of all civilized societies, became a practical political issue only after the first World War. During the nineteenth century these rights had been invoked in a rather perfunctory way to defend individuals against the increasing power of the state and to mitigate the social insecurity caused by the industrial revolution. As a result, in this period the meaning of human rights acquired a new connotation: as the standard slogan of the protectors of the underprivileged, these rights became a kind of additional law, a right of exception for those who had nothing better to fall back upon.

It is clear now why the concept of human rights was treated as a sort of stepchild by nineteenth century political thought, and why no liberal or radical party in the twentieth century, even when an urgent need for an enforcement of human rights arose, saw fit to include these rights in its program. For civil rights—that is, the varying rights of citizens in different countries—were supposed to embody and spell out in the form of tangible laws these eternal Rights of Man, which by themselves were considered independent of citizenship and nationality. By this reasoning, all human beings were citizens of some kind of political community, and if the laws of their country did not live up to the demands of the Rights of Man, then they were expected to change them—by legislative means in a democracy or through revolutionary action in a despotism.

Today, however, the whole question of the Rights of Man has taken on a new life and pertinence. This has been caused by an overwhelming international situation: the emergence of an entirely new category of human beings who, though living in civilized countries, do not possess citizenship in any of them and therefore are forced to exist outside all legal structures. It was during the twenties and thirties that

the hundreds of thousands of "stateless" refugees first appeared; and the events of the forties only served to "normalize" matters by adding its new millions of "displaced persons." Indeed, ever-increasing masses of such "refugees" seem to be the inevitable consequence of each successive political and social catastrophe, spreading the problem of "rightlessness" to new countries and continents until it has become the most vexatious and insoluble point on the agendas of all international conferences.

How troublesome and baffling this problem actually is, can be gauged by the great discrepancy between the efforts of well-meaning people—people who believe that all those privileges enjoyed by only the most prosperous and civilized countries must be inscribed among the "inalienable" rights—and the situation of the rightless themselves, which has so steadily deteriorated that the internment camp—still an exceptional experience for the "stateless" of the twenties and thirties—has become the chief resort in solving the problem of domicile for "displaced persons."

Even the terminology applied to the rightless has deteriorated. To call them "stateless people" was to acknowledge at least that they had lost the protection of their governments and needed international agreements to assure their legal status. The postwar term "displaced persons" was invented expressly to liquidate this troublesome "statelessness" once and for all by not recognizing it. Non-recognition of statelessness always means repatriation, that is, return to a country of origin that either does not recognize the repatriated person as its citizen or, on the contrary, wants him returned for punishment. From this view, the term "displaced person" expresses the only *de facto* existing international agreement, though, at the same time, the fact that no non-totalitarian government has yet availed itself of the implied opportunity of enforced repatriation shows that non-recognition of tsatelessness and the failure to reintegrate the rightless into some kind of legality is not simply due to ill-will.

As a matter of fact, the problem of statelessness on so large a scale has had the effect of confronting the nations of the world with an inescapable and perplexing question: Whether or not there really exist such "human rights," independent of all specific political status and deriving solely from the fact of being human? The Rights of Man, sup-

posedly inalienable, have proved to be unenforceable—even in countries whose constitutions were based upon them—whenever people appeared who were no longer citizens of *any* sovereign state. (It is true that the United States has treated stateless immigrants on a footing of complete equality with other foreigners, but this has been possible only because the United States, the country *par excellence* of immigration, has always considered newcomers, regardless of their former national allegiances, as prospective citizens.)

From the standpoint of theory, recent attempts to frame a new bill of human rights have demonstrated that no one seems able to define with any assurance what these general human rights, as distinguished from the rights of citizens, really are. It may therefore be useful to analyze the plight of the rightless themselves, in order to see what kind of rights they did lose when they lost the Rights of Man.

THE FIRST loss which the rightless suffered was the loss of their homes, which meant the loss of the entire social texture into which they were born and within which they had established for themselves a distinct place in the world. The calamity is far from being unprecedented; from a long-range historical perspective, forced migrations of individuals or whole groups of people for political or economic reasons look like everyday occurrences. What *is* unprecedented is not the loss of a home but the *impossibility of finding a new one*. All of a sudden, there was no place on earth where migrants could go without the most severe restrictions, no country where they would be assimilated, no territory where they could found a new community of their own. This impossibility, moreover, had hardly anything to do with any material problem of overpopulation; it was a problem not of space but of political organization. Nobody had been aware that mankind, which for so long a time had been conceived under the image of a family of nations, had reached a stage where whoever was thrown out of one of these tightly organized closed communities found himself thrown out of the family of nations altogether.*

* The few chances for reintegration open to the new migrants were mostly based on their nationality: Spanish refugees, for instance, were welcomed to a certain extent in Mexico. The United States, in the early twenties, adopted a quota system according to which each nationality already represented in the country received, so to speak, the right to accept a number of former countrymen proportionate to its numerical part in the total population.

The second loss which the rightless suffered was the loss of government protection. This did not just imply the loss of legal status in their own, but in all countries. Treaties of reciprocity and international agreements have woven a web around the earth that makes it possible for the citizen of every country to take his legal status with him no matter where he goes—so that a German citizen under the Nazi regime might not be able to enter a mixed marriage abroad because of the Nuremberg laws. Yet, whoever is no longer caught in it, finds himself flung outside the pale of legality altogether—so that, for instance, during the last war stateless people were invariably in a worse position than enemy aliens who were still indirectly protected by their governments through international agreements.

The loss of government protection is as little unprecedented as the loss of a home. Civilized countries had offered the right of asylum to refugees who, for political reasons, had been persecuted by their governments, and this practice, though never officially incorporated into any constitution, has functioned well enough throughout the nineteenth and even in our century. The trouble arose when it appeared that the new categories of persecuted were far too numerous to be handled by an unofficial practice designed for exceptional cases. Moreover, the majority of refugees could hardly qualify for the right of asylum, since this very "right" was based on the implicit presupposition of political or religious convictions in the persecuted which were not outlawed in the country of refuge. The new refugees were persecuted not because of what they had done or thought, but because of of what they unchangeably were—born into the wrong kind of race or the wrong kind of class or drafted by the wrong kind of government (as in the case of the Spanish Republican Army).* Only in appearance do the needs for a reenforcement of human rights touch upon the fate of the authentic political refugee. Political refugees, of necessity always few in numbers, still enjoy the right to asylum in many countries, and

* How dangerous it can be to be innocent from the point of view of the persecuting government, became very clear when, during the last war, the American government offered asylum to all those German refugees who were threatened by the extradition paragraph in the German-French Armistice. The condition was, of course, that the applicant could prove that he had done something against the Nazi regime. The proportion of refugees from Germany able to fulfill this condition was very small, and they, strangely enough, were not the people who were most in danger.

this right acts, in an informal way, as a genuine substitute for national law.

One of the perplexities of our modern experience has been the fact that it seems to be easier to deprive a completely innocent person of legality than somebody who has committed a political offense or an ordinary crime. Anatole France's famous quip, "If I am accused of having stolen the towers of Notre Dame, I can only flee the country," has assumed a horrible reality. Jurists are so used to thinking of law in terms of punishment—which, in its functioning, always does deprive us of certain rights—that they may find it even more difficult than the layman to recognize that the deprivation of legality, that is, of all rights, has no connection any longer with specific crimes.

II

THIS SITUATION illustrates the many perplexities inherent in the concept of human rights. No matter how they once have been defined (as life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, according to the American formula, or as equality before the law, liberty, protection of property and national sovereignty, according to the French) and how one may attempt to improve on an ambiguous formulation like pursuit of happiness, or an antiquated one, like unqualified right to property, the real situation of those whom the twentieth century has driven outside the pale of the law shows that the loss of these particular rights does not entail absolute rightlessness. For example, the soldier during the war is deprived of his right to life, the criminal of his right to freedom, all citizens during an emergency of their right to the pursuit of happiness—yet nobody would ever claim that in any of these instances a loss of human rights has been suffered. On the other hand, these rights can be granted (though hardly enjoyed) even under conditions of fundamental rightlessness.

The calamity of the rightless is not that they are deprived of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, or of equality before the law and freedom of opinion—formulas which were designed to solve problems *within* given communities—but that they no longer belong to any community whatsoever. Their plight is not that they are not equal before the law, but that no law exists for them, not that they are oppressed but

that nobody even wants to oppress them. Only in the last stage of a rather lengthy process is their right to live threatened—only if they remain perfectly "superfluous," if nobody can be found to "claim" them, may their lives be in danger. Even the Nazis started their extermination of Jews by first depriving them of all legal status (even the status of second-class citizenship) and cutting them off from the world of the living by herding them into ghettoes and concentration camps; and before they set the gas-chambers into motion they had carefully tested the ground and found out to their satisfaction that there were no countries which would claim them. The point is that a condition of complete rightlessness was created before the right to live was challenged.

The same is true to an even ironical extent with regard to the right of freedom, which sometimes is considered the very essence of human rights. There is no question that those outside the pale of the law may have more freedom of movement than a lawfully imprisoned criminal or that they enjoy more freedom of opinion in internment camps of democratic countries than would be the case under any form of despotism, not to mention conditions in totalitarian countries. But neither safety of life—which, in practice, means to be fed by some state or private welfare agency—nor freedom of opinion change in the least the fundamental situation of rightlessness. The prolongation of lives is due to charity and not to right, for there exists no law which could force the nations to feed them; their freedom of movement, if they have it at all, gives them no right to residence which even the jailed criminal enjoys as a matter of course; and their freedom of opinion is a fool's freedom, for nothing they think matters anyhow.

These last points are crucial. The fundamental deprivation of human rights takes place first and above all in depriving a person of a place in the world which makes his opinions significant and his actions effective.* Something much more fundamental than freedom and justice which are rights of citizens is at stake, when the belonging to the community into which one is born is no longer a matter of course and the not-belonging no longer a matter of choice, or when one is placed

* This became very clear when the Nazi regime began to treat its Jews as enemies without first having given them the chance to have opinions or choose sides. The immediate result was that Jews never were recognized as full-fledged enemies of Nazism because their opposition did not rest upon conviction and action. They had been deprived of the faculty for both.

in a situation where, unless he commits a crime, his treatment by other people does not depend on what he does or does not do.

We only became aware of the existence of a right to have rights (and that means to live in a framework where one is judged according to actions and opinions) and a right to belong to some kind of organized community, when there suddenly emerged millions of people who had lost and could not regain these rights because of the new global political situation. The calamity did not arise out of lack of civilization, backwardness or mere tyranny, but, on the contrary, could not be repaired because there was no longer any "uncivilized" spot on earth, because, whether we like it or not, we have really started to live in One World. Only in a completely organized humanity could the loss of home and political status become identical with being expelled from humanity altogether.

Before this, what we must consider today as a "human right" would rather have been thought a general characteristic of the human condition which no tyrant could take away. Its loss entails the loss of the relevance of speech (and man, since Aristotle, was defined as a being commanding the power of speech and thought), and the loss of all human relationship (and man, again since Aristotle, was called the "political animal," that is, one who by definition lives in a community), the loss, in other words, of some of the most essential characteristics of human life.*

Not the loss of specific rights, then, but the loss of a community willing and able to guarantee any rights whatsoever has been the calamity which has befallen ever increasing numbers of people. Man, it turns out, can lose all so-called Rights of Man without losing his essential quality as man, his human dignity. Only the loss of a polity itself expels him from humanity.

---

* This, it is true, was to a certain extent the plight of slaves whom Aristotle therefore did not count among human beings. Yet in the light of recent history, it is possible to say that even slaves were more a part of the human community than the displaced persons in an internment camp or the inmates of a concentration camp. Their labor was needed, used and exploited, and this kept them within the pale of humanity. To be a slave was after all to have a distinctive character and a prescribed place in human society.

III

THESE FACTS offer what seems an ironical, bitter, and belated confirmation of the famous arguments with which Edmund Burke opposed the French Revolution's *Declaration of the Rights of Man.* They appear to buttress his assertion that human rights were an "abstraction," that it was much wiser to rely on an "entailed inheritance" of rights which one transmits to his children like life itself, and to claim one's rights as the "rights of an Englishman" than as the inalienable rights of man. According to Burke, the rights which we enjoy spring "from within the nation," so that neither natural law, nor divine command, nor any concept of mankind, such as Robespierre's "human race, the sovereign of the earth," are needed as a source of law.

The pragmatic soundness of Burke's concept seems to be beyond doubt in the light of our manifold experiences. Not only did loss of national rights in all instances entail the loss of human rights, but the restoration of the latter, as the recent example of the State of Israel proves, has been achieved so far only through the establishment of the former. The conception of human rights broke down at the very moment when those who professed to believe in it were for the first time confronted with people who indeed had lost all other qualities and specific relationships, except that they were still human. The world found nothing sacred in the abstract nakedness of being human. And in view of the objective political conditions, it is hard to say how such concepts of man upon which human rights are based—that he is created in the image of God (in the American formula), or that he is the representative of mankind, or that he harbors within himself the sacred demands of natural law (in the French formula)—could have helped to find a solution to the problem.

The survivors of the extermination camps, the inmates of concentration and internment camps, and even the comparatively happy stateless people did not need Burke's arguments to realize that the abstract nakedness of being nothing but human was their greatest danger. It caused them to be regarded as savages and, afraid that they might finish by being considered as beasts, they insisted on their nationality, the last sign of their former citizenship, as their only remaining and recognized tie with humanity. Their distrust of natural, their preference for

national rights comes precisely from their realization that natural rights are granted even to savages. Thus Burke had already feared that natural "inalienable" rights would confirm only the "right of the naked savage," and therefore reduce civilized nations to the status of savagery. Because only savages have nothing more to fall back upon than the minimum fact of their human origin, people cling to their nationality all the more desperately when they have lost the rights and protection that such nationality once gave them. Only their past with its "entailed inheritance" seems to attest to the fact that they still belong to the civilized world.

Burke's arguments gain an added significance if we look once more at the general human condition of those who are forced out of all political communities. Regardless of treatment, independent of liberties or oppression, justice or injustice, they have lost all those attributes of the world and all those aspects of human existence which are the result of our common labor, the outcome of the human artifice. If it is the tragedy of savage tribes that they inhabit an unchanged nature which they cannot master, yet upon whose abundance or frugality they depend for their livelihood, that they live and die without leaving any trace, without having contributed anything to a common world, then the stateless people are indeed thrown back into a peculiar state of nature. Certainly they are not barbarians, some of them, indeed, belong to the most educated strata of their respective countries; but, in a world that has almost liquidated savagery, they appear, nevertheless, as the first signs of a possible regression from civilization.

The more highly developed a civilization, the more accomplished the world it has produced, the more at home men feel within the human artifice—the more they will resent everything they have not produced, everything which is merely and mysteriously given to them. In normal life we have the whole sphere of private life in which, through friendship, sympathy and love, we can cope more or less adequately with mere human existence. Since the Greeks, we know that highly developed political life breeds a deep-rooted suspicion of this private sphere, a deep resentment against the disturbing miracle contained in the fact that each of us is made as he is—single, unique, unchangeable. This whole sphere of the merely given, relegated to private life in civilized society, is a per-

manent threat to the public sphere, because the public sphere is as consistently based on the law of equality as the private sphere is based on the law of universal difference and differentiation. Equality is not given us but is the result of human organization insofar as it is guided by the principle of justice. We are not born equal; we become equal as members of a group on the strength of our decision to guarantee ourselves mutually equal rights. Highly developed political communities, such as the ancient city-states or modern nation-states, so often insist on ethnic homogeneity because they hope to eliminate as far as possible those natural and always present differences and differentiations which by themselves arouse dumb hatred, mistrust and discrimination. These differences indicate all too clearly the sphere where man cannot act and change at all, *i.e.*, the limitations of the human artifice. No doubt, wherever public life and its law of equality is completely victorious, wherever a civilization succeeds in eliminating or reducing to a minimum the dark background of difference, it will end in complete petrification and be punished, so to speak, for having forgotten that man is only the master, but not the creator of the world.

People forced to live outside the common world are thrown back on their natural givenness, on their mere differentiation. They lack that tremendous equalizer of differences which comes from being citizens of some commonwealth and yet, since they are no longer allowed to partake in the human artifice, they might soon belong to the human race in the same way as animals belong to a specific animal species. The paradox involved in the loss of human rights is that the instant of such loss coincides with the instant when a person becomes a human being in general—without a profession, without a citizenship, without an opinion, without a deed by which to identify and specify himself—*and* different in general, representing nothing but his own absolutely unique individuality, which, deprived of expression within and action upon a common world, loses all significance.

The danger in the existence of such people is twofold: first, and more obviously, their enforced abstract existence, their unrelatedness to the outside world, is a constant temptation to murderers, or rather a constant threat to our consciences. Like murderers, we may not be aware that anybody has been murdered at all if, for all practical pur-

poses, he did not exist before. Second, their ever-increasing numbers threaten our political life, our human artifice, in much the same, perhaps even more terrifying, way as wild nature once threatened the existence of man-made cities. Deadly danger to civilization is no longer likely to come from without. Nature has been mastered and no barbarians threaten to destroy what they simply cannot understand, as the Mongolians threatened Europe for centuries. Even the emergence of totalitarian governments is a phenomenon within, not outside our civilization. The danger is that a global, universally interrelated civilization may produce barbarians from its own midst by forcing millions of people into conditions which, despite all appearances, are the conditions of savages.

IV

THE CONCEPT of human rights can become meaningful again if it is redefined in the light of present experiences and circumstances. We now know even better than Burke that all rights materialize only within a given political community, that they depend on our fellow-men and on a tacit guarantee that the members of a community give to each other. But we also know that apart from all so-called human rights, which change according to historical and other circumstances, there does exist one right that does not spring "from within the nation" and which needs more than national guarantees: it is the right of every human being to membership in a political community.

Philosophically speaking, it would be a serious error to define this one right, which was never even mentioned among the Rights of Man in the categorical framework of the eighteenth century. (One of the reasons that the whole issue has become so confused today is that human rights are still viewed within these categories, and this invariably leads to philosophically absurd and politically unrealistic claims such as that each man is born with the inalienable right to unemployment insurance or an old age pension.) Rights exist only because of the plurality of men, because we inhabit the earth together with other men, while divine command, derived from man's having been created in the image of God, as well as natural law, derived from man's "nature," remain true even if there existed only one single human being.

When the Rights of Man were proclaimed for the first time they

were thought to be independent of history and of the privileges that history had bestowed upon certain strata of society. On the highest level, they were meant to indicate man's emancipation from history and tradition and to announce that he had now come of age. From the beginning, however, this new dignity was of a perplexing nature. It replaced historical rights with natural rights; it put "nature" in the place of history, and it assumed tacitly that nature was less alien to the essence of man than history. The very terminology of the Declaration of Independence as well as of the Rights of Man—"inalienable," "given with birth," "self-evident truths"—implies that man's nature which supposedly developed under the same necessity that compels a child to grow up, was the premise from which his laws and rights were to be deduced. Nobody at that time could possibly have forseen that the "nature" of man, defined and redefined by two thousand years of philosophy, might contain unpredictable and unknown possibilities; that man's mastery of nature would reach a point where he could conceive of a possible destruction of the earth through man-made instruments; and that his knowledge of nature would instil in him serious doubts about the whole existence of natural laws.

Today we have become as emancipated from nature as eighteenth century man was from history. We consider both history and nature to be alien to us to a certain extent, or at least alien to the essence of man. Neither of them any longer offers us that comprehensive whole in which we really could feel spiritually at home. Mankind, on the other hand, which was only a concept or an ideal for eighteenth century man, has grown into a hard, inescapable reality; nations are no longer separated by space and natural obstacles and, consequently, by spiritually insurmountable walls of history and culture.

The most immediate political consequence of this new historical situation, where mankind actually begins to occupy the position formerly assigned to nature or history, is that some of the factual responsibility shared by the members of every national community for all the deeds and misdeeds committed in their name has now expanded to the sphere of international life. The peoples of the world have a vague foreboding of this new burden and try to escape from it into a kind of nationalism that is all the more violent because it is constantly frustrated. They know

that they will be "punished" for sins committed at the other end of the globe, and they have not yet had much opportunity to learn that they may also benefit from every step in the right direction that is taken elsewhere.

This situation, the emergence of mankind as *one* political entity, makes the new concept of "crimes against humanity," expressed by Justice Jackson at the Nuremberg Trials, the first and most important notion of international law. It should be recognized, however, that with this notion international law transcends its present sphere, which has to do only with those laws and agreements that, in peace and war, regulate the intercourse of sovereign nations, and enters the sphere of a law that is above the nations. The concern of this new kind of law cannot be such crimes as aggressive and criminal warfare, breaches of treaty, the oppression and exploitation of one's own or foreign peoples. All such transgressions must be met in the future, as they have been met in the past, by the concerted action of those nations which are the offended parties. Within the framework of present political organization and under the circumstances of sovereign statehood—circumstances which in no way contradict the simultaneous political existence of mankind—they can hardly be outlawed otherwise than by international or reciprocal treaties and alliances. These transgressions attack the rights of citizens, the citizens of a foreign or one's own community, and must be defended by citizens, organized in nations or in parties; but they do not, strictly speaking, attack the rights of man. For man as man has only one right that transcends his various rights as a citizen: the right never to be excluded from the rights granted by his community (an exclusion which occurs not when he is put into jail, but when he is sent to a concentration camp) and never to be deprived of his citizenship. Only then is he excluded from that whole sphere of legality where rights spring from the mutual guarantees which alone can assure them.

Crimes against humanity have become a kind of specialty of totalitarian regimes. In the long run, it will do more harm than good if we confuse this supreme kind of crime with a long series of other crimes which these regimes also indiscriminately commit—such as injustice and exploitation, deprivation of liberty and political oppression. Such crimes are familiar in all tyrannies and will hardly ever be found suf-

ficient to justify interference with another country's sovereign affairs. Soviet Russia's aggressive and imperialist foreign policy has resulted in crimes against many peoples and is of great concern to the whole world, but it is an issue of ordinary foreign politics on the international level, not a concern of humanity as such—that is, of a possible law above nations. Her concentration camps, on the other hand, in which many millions are deprived of even the doubtful benefits of the law of their own country, could and should become the subject of action that would not have to respect the rights and rules of sovereignty.

Corresponding to the one crime against humanity exists the one human right. In defense of the Bill of Rights of the United Nations, whose lack of reality is rather conspicuous, it has sometimes been argued that the mere enumeration of rights serves to stimulate legislation in other countries. This argument would be even more valid if the Bill of Rights did not claim to be the legal expression of the Rights of Man. The benefits derived from an enumeration of existing rights could be great indeed, and might well belong to those blessings that will come about through the growing interrelatedness of all nations. Yet the danger of the claim that all such rights incorporate nothing more nor less than human rights as such, is also clear: in the welter of rights of the most heterogeneous nature and origin, we are only too likely to overlook and neglect the one right without which no other can materialize—the right to belong to a political community.

This human right, like all other rights, can exist only through mutual agreement and guarantee. Transcending the rights of the citizen —being the right of men to citizenship—this right is the only one that can and can only be guaranteed by the comity of nations.

THE ISRAELI COMMUNE
Privacy and the Collective Life

By Ben Halpern

THE DISILLUSIONMENT with Marxism, especially the growing conviction among many socialists that the deterministic hypothesis can only sanction the further development of existing social tendencies toward centralization and bureaucratic control, has caused them to reconsider seriously the utopian socialist ideas of earlier days. What attracts them particularly is the emphasis given by the Utopians to the ethical approach to man's role in history. From this basic position an alternative method of revolution can be envisaged—which, incidentally, was the way all previous social systems sprang up historically, growing in the womb of their predecessors—the method of organic growth from small cells to large bodies, precisely within the capitalist *milieu* and in competition with it.

A study of the history of various small communistic groups immediately raises certain objections. Such societies have, indeed, been founded and have proved that they can prosper without the incentive of private profit. But they have not generally proved that they can live in symbiosis with capitalism, in open social competition with it—attracting members from it and having their own members attracted by it, imitating and being imitated—and still grow at a faster rate than the environment. Yet, without this, there can be no thought of exercising a revolutionary effect upon society.

Of the two types of communes, the secular and religious, only the latter were generally long-lived. But their longevity may have depended largely on the fact that the religious communes were most often closed and insulated societies, protecting themselves from inimical outside influences by rigid taboos and making no effort to exercise their influence outwards. Indeed, when the strict patriarchal regime characteristic of most such settlements broke down, particularly when the religious sanction of their way of life decayed, their communism went speedily by the board and the commune disintegrated peaceably back into its *milieu*.

As for the secular communistic groups, bound together only by the socialist ideal, they dissolved within the span of a generation, most of them surviving for no more than one or two years. The abstract ideal, supported only by its own attraction in the contemporary situation and by no other pressures, collapsed in the face of the demands made upon it by concrete reality. Certainly this experience gave no greater hope than did the history of the religious commune of successfully competing with capitalism within a capitalist *milieu.*

Against this background, the success of the Israeli commune is a striking and significant record of the very qualities we look for in vain in the other cases. The Israeli commune, the *kibbutz,* is open and growing—so far it has grown faster than the Israeli population at large. Yet it is fully secular—even the religious Hapoel Hamizrachi *kibbutzim* derive their socialism not from religious but from social philosophy—and it continues to exist within the contemporary situation on its own merits.

With forty thousand members, covering four generations, the "permanence" of the *kibbutz* cannot be contested. Its functional viability is recognized by anyone who has studied Zionist history. No other form of social organization has been found as well suited as the *kibbutz* for the hardest tasks of Zionist resettlement: for garrisoning isolated outposts; for establishing economically sound enterprises where the odds against success are greatest; for utilizing the labor of immigrants virtually all of whom have to be retrained "on the job."

The *kibbutz* succeeded because it showed itself to be an historical necessity for Zionist pioneering; its continued success depends on maintaining the same front-line position. But it also depends on keeping an experimental open-mindedness and elasticity of approach. Moreover, the commune must either grow or decline; it cannot preserve a static equilibrium in the dynamic environment of Israel. To grow, the *kibbutz* must continually adapt itself to new types of immigrants. Today it has the particularly difficult problem of immigrants for whom *kibbutz* collectivism is repellently reminiscent of the concentration camp, the *kolkhoz* or the DP camp.*

* This, and doctrinal political disputes, are the most critical *kibbutz* problems today. Full discussion must be left for another occasion.

ONE SIGNIFICANT general problem which arises as the *kibbutz* settles into permanency is the collective provision for the personal, intimate spheres of living. In trying to solve this problem the *kibbutz* finds itself, willingly or unwillingly, frankly or covertly, making a series of "concessions" to privacy. In fact, the commune very early tempered its collectivism by recognizing private rights to the *use* of certain property, if not to its disposal. The *kibbutzim* quickly abandoned their original practice of keeping clothing in a common pool and handing it out to the members by size. It simply proved more efficient—not to speak of the members' preference—to mark the clothing and distribute it to personal cubbyholes in the communal wardrobe-and-stockroom. This became what we might call a private "semi-possession." In the same category were the members' room, furniture, books, pictures, drapes, rugs, lamps, *etc.* All these in principle belong to the commune; and the communal title is not merely nominal, for every member is likely to be called upon to give up or to share his room and its appurtenances, temporarily at least, in order to accommodate a sudden influx of immigrants, youth in training, or even week-end visitors. At the same time, these are private possessions to whose use each member has a well-established personal right, a priority which amounts—if one wishes to insist on it—to an exclusive right.

The commune does not attempt to observe any rule of strict equality in distributing these articles. The principle applied is more likely to be the socialist maxim: "To each according to his need." For example, cigarette rations are handed out according to need, and light smokers, or non-smokers, neither get nor expect compensation in other ways for their below-average consumption. Nor is there any resentment over the far more "serious" inequalities in housing where, with insufficient permanent buildings available, the newcomers and the unhealthy have to accept makeshift or crowded quarters. In spite of these inequalities, the commune has been too poor to satisfy individual desires for most consumers' goods, and a rough and equal minimum of decent living is all it can distribute to its members. For anything above that, *kibbutz* members frequently use their spare time to make what they want.

But the *kibbutz* is not isolated in the world. Most members have relatives on the outside, some of whom express their fond feelings in the

form of presents. This frequently accounts for such articles as radios, electrical coffee pots, and electric heaters, which are to be found in an increasing number of rooms in communal houses.

The *kibbutz* also supplies cash to its members under certain conditions. Each member is entitled to a week or two of vacation annually. Those who wish to leave the *kibbutz* for their vacation period must, of course, have money in order to move about in the outer world of capitalism. Up to now the commune has been notably frugal in the provision it made for this purpose. The general rule was to give members only enough for a round-trip bus fare to the nearest city. The assumption was that *kibbutz* members would want to visit other communes or their relatives, and in either case their expenses, other than for travel, would be covered by the hospitality of their hosts. But *kibbutz* members have acquired the habit of saving their bus fare by hitch-hiking. They prefer to use the money to buy presents for their hosts or for little personal indulgences on vacation. Private funds also make possible other purchases, for use in their rooms or by their children.

These infrequent vacation trips may occasion the only contact with private spending money for a large proportion of *kibbutz* members. But there is a significant, and probably increasing proportion of them who *must* have personal funds as part of their normal routine. These are the members whose work takes them away from the *kibbutz* for days, weeks, months or even years at a stretch. To be sure, the commune has many members employed outside the collective homestead as farm laborers, road workers, stevedores, or factory hands, whose wages are paid into the common treasury, and who are fully supplied from the common warehouse, without ever handling money themselves. But truckdrivers, bus drivers, and tractormen are a different matter. The communes need the services of such men and machines in their own economic routine, and, since they have them available, they often hire out their services to the public. The payment for their work goes, of course, to the communal treasury, like the wages of other outside workers, yet they cannot feed themselves on box-lunches out of the communal kitchen as the others do. They are away from home so frequently and for so long, that it is necessary for them to have pocket-money, and the leeway granted them in this respect is relatively great. They are thus in

a comparatively good position to satisfy their own and their family's and friends' needs for little personal items not included in the standard supplies of the *kibbutz* warehouse.

THERE ARE some members who have to set up a private household, or live away from home for even longer periods. In fact, every youngster in a *kibbutz* upon reaching eighteen is free to do so for a year with the commune's help, if he chooses to complete his education in a different environment. But there are many other cases. A considerable number of young men and women of the commune enlisted in the Jewish Brigade or other World War II army units. Also, a surprisingly large number of *kibbutz* members are called upon, for short or long periods, to perform various public services. The men who were sent abroad for two-year stretches to train prospective immigrant pioneers were almost always members of *kibbutzim*. In such a position the Palestinian delegate had, of course, to live like any other salaried worker or executive, even though on a modest scale. The same situation occurs within Israel itself. From the very early days of the history of the commune, its outstanding leaders were frequently called upon to work in positions of a country-wide scope, and hence had to live privately in the city. A good part of the Israeli Parliament and Cabinet is today composed of such men and women, and you will find them heading Israel's army, navy, and airforce units, its budding merchant marine, as well as its consulates and embassies. For some of these men public office has been their main occupation for so long a time that they maintain merely a symbolical tie with their old *kibbutz*, though the symbolical tie is jealously preserved. Many others, however, still have their rooms in the *kibbutz*, where their families still live, and come home as often as they can on week-ends or other free days. The effect of such intimate connections between members living in town and in the *kibbutz* is twofold: it brings into the folkways of the leadership of Israel something of the simplicity of *kibbutz* living, and it also spreads in the *kibbutz* a taste for the variety and conveniences of city life.

Generally, these tastes can be satisfied only by members with private funds, or those with friends outside the *kibbutz*. As we have seen, the *kibbutz* member does not feel anything in the least objectionable in privileged treatment for special cases. But here we have something

different: by their private efforts, through special opportunities outside the *kibbutz,* or out of private funds, some members are able to satisfy—not special needs—but desires of a type common to all *kibbutz* members. The situation has recently been the topic for a considerable amount of discussion, since it does put a strain on communal principles.

It is a sign of the extent to which the private sphere of living is increasingly respected that, in spite of some dogmatic rumblings, there is no serious effort to stem the spread of private acquisition by "moralistic" action. The most prevalent attitude is based on the sensible reflection that, in the total economy of life of the *kibbutz* and of its members, private money is a trivial and, maybe, a transient matter, and may be best treated by overlooking it. Others propose to raise the general standard of consumers' supply and provide more generously for the comfort and intimate social life of the members. It is suggested to raise the cash allowance for vacations, or distribute to the members a certain amount of money to be spent as they please. This idea, if pushed far enough, could lead into quite different forms of organization than the *kibbutz,* such as the *moshav* and *moshav shitufi,* which will be described later. At present, these are merely vague proposals, cropping up in one place or another, while the existence of small private funds and private acquisitions among *kibbutz* members is more or less winked at, without being recognized, by many *kibbutzim.*

But the "problem" of private money is symptomatic of a broader tendency, observable in many *kibbutzim,* to concentrate a greater part of the institutional framework around the family rather than the commune as a whole. The standard architecture of the *kibbutz* shows the great emphasis its founders laid on collective institutions. The central buildings are usually the office and clinic, the communal dining room, the communal children's houses, and the communal showers, as well as the communal laundry, shoe-shop, wardrobe, *etc.* Grouped around these are the dormitories and other buildings, among which are scattered the communal privies. The greatest inequalities in the *kibbutz,* as well as the most painful overall shortages in facilities, exist in the field of housing. The best housing, allotted by seniority or on grounds of special need, are cement six-room or eight-room two-story buildings, allocated one room to a married couple or one room to every two or three single

persons. A level below them are one-story four-room wooden houses, allocated in the same way. Single "houses" are generally available only in the form of tents, the lowest rung in the ladder of residential facilities. Thus, all permanent housing, like the general architectural layout of the *kibbutz,* enhances the *togetherness* of the members.

THE THEORIES behind this type of architectural planning differs somewhat in the two major versions of the *kibbutz idea*—that of the "small" and the "large" *kibbutz.* In the small commune, togetherness of the members is favored on essentially spiritual grounds, though usually the argument is sociologically formulated. Many early theorists of the commune sought a personal spiritual renovation, arising out a new, more immediate relationship with nature and their fellow-men. They wished to "break down barriers." A concrete expression of this impulse was the crucial significance with which some of them invested all occasions that brought the group together physically. This was the day of the romanticism of all-night *horas,* the group dance of the commune. A meal in a *kvutzah* (as the small communes are called) was expected by some of its ideologists to bear the inspirational potential of a sacramental feast, and the whole togetherness of communal living was prized by these secular mystics as a medium for personal elevation.

The proponents of the large *kibbutz* are more prosaic in their approach, and hence inclined to take the ordinary view that society can best foster the more intimate spheres of personality by providing room for privacy. Consequently, while the small commune, hoping to facilitate the creation of a "larger family" of kindred spirits, believed in limiting its numbers to an optimum figure and tried to maintain its homogeneity by a careful selection of members, the large *kibbutz* was, in principle, open to all. Its theorists believed in a varied economic and social structure, combining industry and agriculture, and bringing together members from widely different backgrounds and of different ages. This diversified society, they felt, would offer the individual a greater scope for self-expression than the (in their opinion) constricting intimacy of the *kvutzah.*

Yet they, too, adhere to the standard collectivist plan of *kibbutz* architecture, with its common children's houses, dining room, showers, and privies, and its restriction of the private residential domain to sleep-

ing quarters. In their view, this plan seemed to preserve the essential advantages of communal living, which tend to be mainly social and economic. The communal children's house and dining hall serve, according to the theory, to free the women comrades from the slavery of nursery and kitchen. It was also apparently intended—though it is doubtful whether things worked out that way—to increase the proportion of "productive" to "service" personnel, by freeing women for field and shop work; at any rate, the *kibbutz* economized on the capital outlay for feeding the commune and tending its children by concentrating these institutions in central buildings. There was a particular attachment to the institution of the communal dining room, since this was not only the place where the members gathered to eat, but also the center of *kibbutz* democracy, the forum of the town meeting.

In the course of years, both the small and large commune have begun to doubt whether the principles of this architectural plan actually serve the original social purpose of the planners. In the earliest days the theorists of the small commune felt that the ideal of "the larger family" could be realized by no more than twelve persons in a single group. By a series of stages a new optimum figure of about a hundred members (or two hundred persons, with dependents) was arrived at—the point beyond which the social and economic "absorptive capacity" of a small commune would be drained. But the intensive development of the farmlands of the communes brought the average long-established settlements to the point of requiring about two hundred working members; and the pressure of immigration supplied eager candidates, so that the groups grew far beyond their theoretical optimum. Those who once dreamed of a sort of collectivist communion are perhaps better qualified than others to realize that a meal served to two hundred persons is simply a meal, not a social sacrament.

The theorists of the large commune thought they had provided for the private sphere of life merely by the size of the settlement, for the members of the *kibbutz* would not be cramped in their personal and social development if there were a larger and more heterogeneous *milieu*. There are, of course, more concrete ways of putting their position than this. In a large *kibbutz,* with a variety of agricultural and industrial projects, it was thought more members would find positions calling for

skill and responsibility. Thus, the individual would be more likely to have "job satisfaction." Socially, the member would not be forced into intimate association with the same people all the time, for the larger and more varied population would give him greater leeway to seek out the kind of social circle he preferred.

But when some of these communes grew to have five hundred or more members, which meant a total population of a thousand or more, it became increasingly obvious that the collectivist architecture of the *kibbutz* was a definite obstacle to the exercise of certain rights of privacy to which members were entitled. A dining hall seating hundreds of persons at a time—and even then having to run its meals in shifts—was a distinct, and as many members began to feel, an unnecessary annoyance.

THE *KIBBUTZ* has been slow in changing its attitude on this point First of all, even the biggest *kibbutzim* grew by gradual stages, and so it was always easier to extend the existing dining hall lengthwise or sidewise rather than build a new structure on a different plan. Secondly, a building plan designed to feed communally the population of a large *kibbutz* in a series of smaller, more intimate rooms would be a very large, expensive project that most *kibbutzim* do not care to undertake. Moreover, as we noted, the *kibbutz* dining room has an additional function as a town meeting hall. *Kibbutz* leaders in large communes are already somewhat concerned over the flagging of interest in this central institution of democratic management and government, and before they can think of ways to break up the dining room into smaller units, they have to solve the problem of housing the town meeting in a way that would similarly stress its central significance. Today, every member has to visit the dining room frequently, and so cannot escape some of the manifestations of *kibbutz* democracy at work.

Thus, in one of the largest *kibbutzim,* Givat Brenner, the dining room is to this day a "temporary" building, a wooden shack several times extended. Even though they have built a large cultural center, with a theatre hall seating about five hundred people which might—though in far too formal a manner for the *kibbutz*—accommodate the town meeting, they have not yet begun to work on a permanent set-up for their dining-room. On the other hand, when Yagur, another one of the three largest *kibbutzim,* about ten years ago built its pride and

joy, a large cement dining room, there was widespread criticism throughout the *kibbutz* movement. *Kibbutz* members from other places expressed themselves quite caustically about the senselessness of sinking so much money into a structure whose functional value, in terms of the social aims of the community, they strongly questioned.

The solution of this problem has given rise to only nebulous projects so far. There is some talk of an arrangement whereby a number of dining rooms in the same building could be served from a central kitchen by dumb-waiter arrangements. A more modest "reform" already introduced in many places is simply to make the tables smaller, seating only four or six at a table instead of the standard eight to ten. But in the meantime, one notices what might be called certain "fringe" phenomena: some *kibbutz* members do what they can on their own initiative to create more scope for privacy. It was always possible for a sick person, though not so ill as to require medical attention, to stay in his room and have a friend bring his meals to him from the communal kitchen. I am told that in several *kibbutzim* this practice is noticeably growing.

I would hazard a guess that the immigration from Central Europe, and lately from Anglo-Saxon countries, had had a good deal to do with widening the spheres of privacy in the *kibbutz*. Ten years ago, the equivalent of the current "problem" of private money was the much more innocent institution of the *kaffee klatsch* in a private room, which was introduced by German immigrants and is now faily prevalent. There is, one feels, a distinct tendency, especially in the larger communes, towards making private rooms rather than the common dining hall, serve as the center of *kibbutz* socializing. A social function in the dining-room has become something of a formal occasion—a far cry, indeed, from its original youthful spontaneity.

The immigration from Germany was also responsible for another odd departure from collectivist town planning which flourished ten years ago. In this instance of individualism, dissatisfaction with the lack of privacy involved the members' own living quarters. During those years of German immigration, one saw huge packing boxes containing their household goods along the piers of Haifa and Tel Aviv. Such a *liftvan,* as they were called, was somehow acquired by many a *kibbutz* member and converted during his spare time into a "single house."

Ten years later, however, *liftvan* housing is no longer a feature of the architectural profile of the *kibbutz,* for with the cessation of German Jewish immigration at the beginning of the war, the supply of *liftvans* was cut off. But a new feature of *kibbutz* architecture is the effort to get away from blocks of four-room houses and to build smaller units. In Givat Brenner an ingenious architect has worked out a two-room building which provides maximum privacy for the two tenants. Instead of having the entries side by side off a common veranda, the rooms are now placed back to back and each one has its own private entry, veranda, and lawn, at opposite ends of the structure.

THE NEWEST trend is even more emphatically in the direction of privacy. Some of the *kibbutzim* are beginning to build their permanent residential buildings with plumbing fixtures. If this becomes general, it may eliminate altogether the communal shower and the communal privy from the architectural plan of the *kibbutz.* This innovation has so far been introduced, to my knowledge, only in one *kibbutz,* but it is part of the plans for the immediate future in others, showing a willingness to modify collectivist preconceptions that may augur other changes along these lines in the future.

For more than comfort or delicacy is involved in one final deviation from collectivist institutions which has long been in practice in two such outstanding communes as Deganiah, fondly known as the "mother" of the small communes, and Ain Kharod, which may perhaps be called the father of the large ones. In both places the communal children's house is used as a dormitory only for infants. From the age of two or three, children sleep in their parents' houses, an additional room being added to their parents' room for this purpose. In Ain Kharod, at sixteen a child is free, if he wishes, to leave his parents' room and live with his school class in a special dormitory of their own. But if he prefers, he may continue to have his own room with his parents.

The reason for this arrangement is that the members of both communes are convinced that it makes for healthier child development to give the child more of the family atmosphere than is possible in the hours between four or five P.M. and bed-time, the time sacred to parent-child meetings in all *kibbutzim.* Other communes are equally convinced that the collective child dormitory arrangement is educationally preferable.

This is certainly not the place to discuss this significant problem other than to remark on the fact that the *kibbutz* situation *forces* its members to think seriously about questions of this type, which are on the frontiers —or sometimes well beyond the current horizon—of pedagogical experiment. But this much can be said: even the most convinced proponents of the child dormitory admit that it makes it extremely difficult for the child ever to be *alone,* and that a certain type of educational experience, particularly valuable for some kinds of children, is thereby denied or at least restricted in the *kibbutz.* I am under the impression that a member of the newer *kibbutzim* and a good proportion of the *kibbutz* members would like to follow the example of Deganiah and Ain Kharod, because of considerations such as these.

What do the trends outlined so far signify as to the future of the *kibbutz?* Are they omens of disintegration, or are they signs of growth, of plasticity, of adjustment? Do they go far enough to satisfy the demands of privacy which will continue to be pressed? Can they go much farther without endangering the very basis of the commune?

Briefly, it is not my opinion that the concessions to privacy formally or informally made in some or all the *kibbutzim* either have endangered the basically collectivist character of the *kibbutz* or foreshadow its social disintegration. As long as the *kibbutz* maintains its essential machinery of collective production and distribution of income, it can make all sorts of "concessions" to privacy without endangering its basic character. And as long as these concessions meet real needs of individual growth and do not violate the maxim, "From each according to his ability," they will cement rather than dissolve the collective social solidarity.

There has been talk of breaking down the work teams of the larger communes into smaller units in order to distribute greater responsibility and stimulate greater interest among the members. In connection with this, one writer proposed a system of bonuses to work teams who increased their productivity. This suggestion would undermine the commune at its base, but so far it remains a merely individual expression of opinion. The *kibbutz* in general is far from going in the direction of any such change.

There is more, though still slight, sentiment for increasing the

amount of freedom *kibbutz* members have in choosing their own consumers' goods. This, too, could be pushed so far as to turn the *kibbutz* into something different—for example a *moshav* or a *moshav shitufi,* the two alternative forms of socialist farm settlement available to those in Israel who want a larger sphere of privacy than is possible in a commune. The *moshav* was founded almost as early as the *kibbutz.* The *moshav shitufi,* however, is a relatively recent development, representing a genuinely new alternative to both the *kibbutz* and the *moshav.* According to its adherents, it combines the advantages and avoids the shortcomings of both.

IN THE early days of the first commune, Deganiah, a number of its prominent members decided they were not made for collective living. They wanted more economic freedom, closer family relations, and greater privacy than could be afforded by the commune. Yet they were determined to continue as "socialist" farmers in Palestine—that is, to live entirely on the wages of their own toil renouncing all income from land rent, interest on capital loaned to others, and profit from hired labor. These men founded Nahalal, the first *moshav.**

They acquired their land on lease from the Jewish National Fund, a public land-owning agency operating with contributed funds. The JNF allotted to each settler only enough land and equipment to keep him and his family busy through the year, thus severely restricting his chances to try to profit from hired labor, or to accumulate capital for speculation. The cooperative set-up in Nahalal and similar settlements—the cooperative purchasing and sale, the common agricultural plan underlying the individually operated holdings, the general settlement arrangements for self-defense, education, and mutual aid—similarly limited the extent to which any member could surpass his neighbor in wealth, but it also offered security against any member's falling below a decent minimum through handicaps or misfortune.

Where all production on a *moshav* is on individual farmsteads, the *moshav shitufi* bases its economy to a large, and in some cases almost exclusive, extent on collective production: on grain and fodder fields,

* *Kibbutz* members and the influence of *kibbutz* ideolgoy and experimentation also contributed a great deal to the development of urban producer's cooperatives and labor-controlled corporations. This, too, is a channel for the competitive expansion of socialism.

cultivated by collectively owned and operated machinery, on orchards collectively farmed, on collective industrial projects. In addition, members may have individual poultry runs or garden plots; but the problem has already arisen in some *moshavim shitufim* of restricting the extent of this private economy, so that members may not be tempted to shirk their responsibilities to, or try to escape their dependence on, the collective economy.

In the *moshav shitufi* one portion of income is withheld from the members to finance the social and economic services of the community. The greater part is distributed on the basis of hours worked (which is expected to conform to a standard) in the collective economy. Women have a system of rotating household work, so that they are freed for part-time community jobs. The portion of cash income distributed to the members is spent at the cooperative store of the community in accordance with their members' tastes and personal budget. There is, of course, a family-centered architectural plan, and meals, sleep, and intimate social functions are centered in the individual home.

In adopting the production methods of the *kibbutz,* the *moshav shitufi* hopes to be able to settle in difficult frontier areas, where the *moshav* has not hitherto succeeded. It hopes also to be able to accommodate new immigrants and put them to work productively at once while training them, as the *kibbutz* could do far better than the *moshav.* It also hopes, by adopting many of the *moshav* principles of distribution, to provide a more "livable" atmosphere than the *kibbutz.* Whatever may be the final conclusion on *this point,* it is already possible to say that it makes the *moshav shitufi* far more suitable than the *kibbutz* for the reception of the new immigrants, who come to Israel with an aversion to a barracks atmosphere. The *moshav shitufi* is already a major instrument for the resettlement of the more mature new immigrant, while the *kibbutz* is now mainly directing its appeal to the young.

The *moshav shitufi* is still regarded as an experimental form, even in Israel. It can hardly be doubted, however, that it is a permanent addition to the social scene of that country. On the other hand, no one in Israel imagines that this child of the marriage of the *moshav* and *kibbutz* ideas is going to swallow up its parents in the near future. It still has a good deal of trial and error groping to go through before

its own destiny becomes quite clear. If, in the meantime, both its parents seem in their own further development to converge toward their offspring, they will nevertheless remain for the foreseeable future as distinct features in the Israeli landscape. Only time will tell whether the bending of the *kibbutz,* for example, towards the *moshav* means ultimately its conversion into something other than a collective, or rather its institutionalization of collective principles in forms adapted to the pressures of the real situation. In either case, what we will have promises to be a basically socialist form of living spreading by its own intrinsic advantage through a dominantly (though the dominance is already problematic) capitalistic society.

NATIONALITIES IN RUSSIA
An Historical Review

By Solomon M. Schwarz

EVERY DISCUSSION of problems relating to the Soviet Union invariably runs into a psychological dilemma: Some readers expect only to be shown once again that everything is bad in the Soviet Union while others demand to hear, for the hundredth time, that everything is perfect there. But Russian reality is many-faceted and contradictory. Russia has gone through a tremendous revolution which aroused the millions of her people and gave a powerful impetus to the development of the country and particularly to the cultural awakening of the masses.

True, the revolution soon assumed the character of an anti-democratic dictatorship, but this did not stop the revolutionary process. On the contrary, during the first decade the revolution attained a broad sweep. Eventually, however, the dictatorship subjected to its control all aspects of the people's life and assumed a finished totalitarian character.

For decades Russian life has been caught in this contradiction between the progressive and basically democratic nature of the revolution and the anti-democratic character of the political system that emerged from it. This is especially apparent in the nationalities' question.

The national diversity of the Soviet Union leads to problems that differ radically from those, say, in the United States. Here, too, the population is not nationally homogeneous in the cultural-ethnic sense (in the sense of "nationality" rather than "nation"), but here the question is essentially one of national "extraction." In its overwhelming majority, the population of the United States consists of immigrants and the descendants of immigrants from Europe, who had belonged to various European nationalities. In the United States the immigrants, arriving in small groups or as family units, at first tend to settle in national "colonies" which gradually become dispersed throughout the

country and submerged in the surrounding population. Their children attend American public schools, and English becomes their main language. The second generation of immigrants, and certainly the third, is already thoroughly Americanized.

Therefore, in this country the nationalities' problem has been basically a problem of integrating originally heterogeneous national elements into a single nation, a problem of gradually eliminating the cultural-ethnic diversity and creating an American culture.

In Europe, and particularly in Russia, the question presents itself quite differently. The Soviet Union is made up of many nationalities, but almost none of them, insofar as we speak of nationalities which live in more or less compact masses, forms an independent state outside the boundaries of the Soviet Union. (The only noteworthy exception was until recently provided by the Germans, for whom a Republic of Volga Germans had been organized along the middle stretches of the Volga. However, this Republic was destroyed in August, 1941, when the German population of this region was deported to Asia.) Thus, the nationalities' problem in Russia is not one of fusing nationalities into a single Soviet people with a gradual loss of their cultural-ethnic identity, but of assuring the opportunity for free development of their national individualities within the framework of a united Soviet state.

The free devolopment of nationalities consists basically of two elements: 1) national self-determination and self-government; 2) the development of a national culture of their own, or rather, cultural development through national forms. Until recently, Soviet literature on the nationalities' question centered its attention principally on national self-determination, which had been allegedly realized in the Soviet Union. It is only in recent years that stress began to be laid more and more on the cultural and economic development of the "minorities," *i.e.*, non-Russian nationalities. In reality, national self-determination in the Soviet Union is a fiction, although the cultural growth of nationalities is an indisputable fact.

THE TRADITIONAL Bolshevik concepts of government were based on the idea of maximum centralization of power and control. The idea of a federal union of states was rejected on principle. As a consequence, there could be no really autonomous administration of the state's

divisions and subdivisions. But the revolution had unleashed powerful centrifugal forces among the many nationalities which made up the Tsarist Empire, and the Bolshevik party, when it came into power, was faced with the task of holding together a disintegrating multi-national state, which implied more or less substantial concessions to federalistic tendencies. A government structure had to be built which in its essence upheld the principle of centralization while formally introducing elements of federalism and local autonomy.

The formal structure of the Soviet State resulting from these contradictory tendencies merits attention. Under the terms of the Soviet Constitution now in force, the Soviet Union is a federation of sixteen republics—called Union Republics. In each of these, one particular national group is supposed to constitute the bulk of the population, and actually does.[1] Besides the homogeneous popular majority, however, most Union Republics shelter a multitude of national and ethnic minority groups, which again are granted administrative autonomy in areas in which one such group encompasses the majority, absolute or relative, of the area's population.

Such autonomous national units exist on three different levels, namely, as autonomous republics; as national autonomous provinces (*oblasti*); and as national distircts (*okruga*). An autonomous republic is considered a state; its executive is called the Council of Ministers, its legislature, the Supreme Soviet—just as in the case of the Soviet Union and the sixteen Union Republics. Autonomous provinces are merely administrative units like other provinces and enjoy only a little more autonomy than the latter. As for national districts, they have been set up in remote, thinly populated areas, inhabited by semi-nomadic peoples having a low cultural level.

Today there are sixteen autonomous republics, nine autonomous provinces, and ten national districts. With the sixteen Union Republics, this makes for fifty-one national units endowed formally with varying degrees of autonomous organization. All of them are separately represented in the Council of Nationalities, the so-called second chamber of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. In all of these units the language

[1] There is one exception—the Karelian-Finnish Republic, where the number of Russians (Great-Russians) is slightly higher than that of Karelians and Finns.

of the dominant national group enjoys preferential treatment in administrative agencies, courts and schools.

This is the overall outcome of the Soviet Union's efforts to combine maximum efficiency of her centralized government machine with the federalistic requirements of a multi-national state. Institutionally viewed, this is the administrative pattern that determines the national conditions of life of the various peoples of the Soviet Union; in reality, however, their conditions depend on factors quite distinct from the administrative set-up and it is a much different sort of life from what one is tempted to envisage on the basis of the seemingly liberal, pluralistic pattern of government institutions.

THE FREEDOM of national self-determination was one of the first principles proclaimed by the victorious leaders of the Soviet revolution. In the appeal to workers, soldiers and peasants of November 7, 1917 which announced the seizure of power by the Soviets, the new government committed itself "to guarantee to all nations inhabiting Russia the unrestricted right to self-determination." A week later, on November 15, 1917, the Council of People's Commissars promulgated a Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, solemnly promising that its "activity regarding Russia's nationalities" would be based on the following principles:

> "(1) Equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.
>
> (2) Right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, including separation and forming of independent states.
>
> (3) Abolishment of all and sundry national and national-religious restrictions.
>
> (4) Free development of national minorities and ethnic groups inhabiting Russia's territory."

However, it was not accidental that federal union was not mentioned in the Declaration, for the Bolsheviks were strongly opposed to any move towards federalism. But even at this time, individual national groups began to raise the issue; the Ukrainians particularly were active in fostering the federalistic idea.

In its dealings with the Ukrainians the Soviet Government first introduced the technique of applying the principle of "self-determination," which, developed and refined throughout the years, was launched on an international scale after World War II. The military advance of

Soviet troops, reinforced by skeleton formations set up in Russia of future "national" pro-Soviet armies, was combined with the political activity of small Bolshevik groups in the regions to be subjected to "self-determination."

"Self-determination" under Moscow orders was even more overt in White Russia (Belorussia). While an independent White-Russian democratic republic was in the making, Moscow decided to act quickly and produced out of the magician's hat a ready-made Soviet republic. The incident is frankly described in one of the recent official textbooks of Soviet constitutional law:[2]

> "In December, 1918 the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) made the decision to create the White-Russian Socialist Soviet Republic. On December 29, 1918 Comrade Stalin informed the chairman of the North-Western Regional Committee of the RCP by wire that White-Russians on their way from Moscow to Smolensk had taken along a manifesto on the formation of the White-Russian SSR, and that the Central Committee of the RCP and Comrade Lenin personally were requesting that they be received as younger brothers who perhaps were inexperienced but willing to devote their lives to Party and Soviet work.
>
> "The day after, the Sixth North-Western Regional Conference of Bolsheviks began its proceedings; it constituted itself as the First Convention of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of White Russia and passed the decision to form the White-Russian S.S.R. On January 1, 1919, White-Russia's Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government adopted a manifesto, edited by Comrade Stalin, on the establishment of the Soviet system in the new republic."

According to Soviet legal theory, only a Soviet Congress was entitled to pass such a decision. But the First White Russian Soviet Congress, which, of course, confirmed the previous decision and announced the creation of the White Russian S.S.R., did not meet until a month later, on February 2, 1919. By that time the legally non-existent White-Russian S.S.R. already had been officially recognized (on January 31) by the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic. In fact, the White-Russian Government, as was pointed out, had been installed a month earlier by the regional confer-

[2] A. I. Denisov, *Soviet Constitutional Law*, Moscow, 1947, p. 211. (All sources in Russian).

ence of the Russian Communist Party, acting on express orders from the party's Central Committee in Moscow.

It seems to be a less known fact that the very principle of national self-determination was soon formally dropped by the Communist Party. The first attempts to abandon the idea of national self-determination were made as early as the first winter of Soviet rule. At the Third Congress of Soviets in January, 1918, Stalin, then People's Commissar for Nationality Affairs, declared that the right of self-determination was "not a self-determination right of the bourgeoisie but a right of the toiling masses of the nation in question."[3] The leader of the Social Democrats (Mensheviks), Julius Martov, pointed out that Stalin's "interpretation" was in conflict with the position taken by the Soviet peace delegation in the peace parley with the Germans, where the Bolshevik negotiators had insisted that the future of Poland and the Baltic areas be decided through a plebiscite. The answer given to Martov by Yevgeni A. Preobrazhenski, alternate member of the Bolshevik Central Committee, was not exactly pertinent, but it certainly anticipated future developments. He brushed aside the denial of self-determination through democratic channels to Ukrainians, Georgians, Armenians, etc., with the statement that "bourgeois parliamentarianism in the Ukraine, in the Caucasus, etc., already is outdated, it is . . . a past stage of the development," whereas he justified the demand for a plebiscite in German-occupied Polish and Baltic areas on the grounds that the people there still had "to fight for the establishment of the democratic order."[4] Stalin in his concluding remarks wholeheartedly supported Preobrazhenski's spurious reasoning.[5]

THE NEW doctrine, along with its fake sociology, found official recognition in the draft of a party program adopted by the Eighth Party Convention (March, 1919). The "right to self-determination" was no longer a party demand; instead, the program contained a substitute formula: the "recognition of the right of colonies and nations not enjoying equality to secede as states." But this time no doubt was left in

---

[3] *Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets,* Petersburg, 1918, p. 73.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 77.
[5] *Ibid.* p. 80.

anyone's mind as to who would determine "the right" of self-determination. The passage read:

> "In the question as to who is the exponent of the nation's will to separation, the Russian Communist Party adopts the historical class point of view, taking into account the stage which the nation in question has reached in its historical development—whether it is on the road from medievalism to bourgeois democracy, or whether it is on the road from bourgeois democracy to Soviet or proletarian democracy, etc." (*Pravda,* February 26, 1919).

At this early stage—in 1919—the now familiar technique was unequivocally formulated in the Communist Party program! If the Communists want to foment national rebellions in other countries, then it will be a case of fostering "bourgeois democracy" vs. "medievalism" and of clamoring for "liberation," "plebiscites," etc. Under the Soviet system, however, only the "toiling masses"—and they, of course, only through the instrumentality of the Communist Party machine—have the right to say what the "nation" wants.

The new formula, which, after all, only elaborated on what Stalin and Preobrazhenski had told the Third Soviet Congress fourteen months earlier, was adopted after a heated debate. Not that there were advocates of national rights at the Eighth Party Convention who opposed the falsification of the self-determination principle, but because a number of "leftist" oppositionists (Bukharin, Pyatakov, etc.), detected in the draft program a great concession to the bourgeois idea of national self-determination!

How little was left of the program of inalienable national rights was strikingly demonstrated by those speakers who refuted the stand taken by Bukharin and Pyatakov. Failing to notice that the draft program merely contemplated a restricted right to secession instead of a right to self-determination, they went on talking as though nothing had been changed. But in what terms! For instance, David B. Ryazanov, scholarly expert on nineteenth century international affairs, reasoned as follows:[6]

> 'You cannot with impunity announce the abandoning of the slogan of the nations' right to self-determination under the Soviet

[6] *Eighth Convention of the Russian Communist Party,* Moscow, March 18 to 23, 1919. *Stenographic Record of Proceedings,* Moscow, 1919, p. 41.

system just now when the preservation of this Soviet system is in setting as many oppressed nations of all kinds as possible at the imperialist wolves."

Argued cautious Mikhail P. Tomski, for many years supreme chief of Soviet labor unions:[7]

> "I don't think there is anyone in this room who would say that self-determination of nations or national movement is something normal or desirable. We regard these things as an unavoidable evil."

Stalin was right when he said two years later, at the Tenth Party Convention (1921), that national self-determination "has become an empty slogan," that the Communist Party no longer accepted its historical watchword:

> "It has been two years since we bade farewell to this slogan. This slogan is no longer in our program. Our program does not refer to national self-determination—a completely hazy slogan—it refers to a more distinctly molded and more definite slogan, the right of nations to secede as states. . . . At the present moment, when the liberation movement is flaring up in the colonies, this slogan is a revolutionary slogan. As the Soviet states joined in a federation on a voluntary basis, the right to separation remains unutilized in accordance with the will of those very peoples that form the R.S.F.S.R. As far, however, as we have to deal with colonies which are in the clutches of England, France, America, Japan, countries such as Arabia, Mesopotamia, Turkey, Hindustan, i.e., countries which are colonies or semi-colonies, the slogan of the right of peoples to separation is a revolutionary one, and to abandon it would be playing into the hands of imperialists." (Stalin, "Works," Vol. V, pp. 42-43).

Thus the right to secede (occasionally still called the right to self-determination) is from then on used as a propaganda weapon against "imperialists," an ideological export commodity. Within the borders of the Soviet Union national self-determination is no longer considered a "revolutionary slogan," and must be discarded.

ON PAPER, the Communist Party abandoned its traditional opposition to a federal system of government after it came to power. However, no change in the party's extremely centralistic attitude and policy

[7] *Op. cit.* p. 71.

was intended, nor did any such change take place. This was openly admitted: "Creating a Soviet federation and building Soviet autonomy did by no means imply to any extent the proclamation of the principle of decentralizing the administration, nor abandonment of the intention to create a centralized proletarian state."[8]

In fact the principle of national self-determination and the federal facade of the Soviet state merely served to disguise the true nature of Soviet governmental organization. At an early stage the Communist Party devised an efficient organization scheme to transform the alleged federal union into a strictly unitarian and highly centralized state. All government ("Soviet") agencies from the very first were made subordinate to the party organization, the structure of which had always been centralistic on principle and grew even more rigorously and tightly centralistic as the years went by.

At the first public convention of the "autonomous" Communist Party of the Ukraine, held in Kharkov early in March, 1919, the principle of subordination of all party divisions to the one and only Central Committee in Moscow was most unequivocally laid down by one of Moscow's most authoritative spokesmen, Yakov M. Sverdlov, chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Soviet Republic and member of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. Sverdlov[9] passionately stressed "the inseparability, the wholeness, the unity of our party in its entirety, regardless of how our old unitary Russia is going to be subdivided, regardless of whether, depending on this or that political, international situation, we will have to divide what was Russia into separate republics—Latvia, Lithuania, White Russia, Estonia, Ukraine."

Sverdlov had simply summarized the sacrosanct and unarguable fundamentals of the Russian Communist Party's organizational policy. The Eighth Party Convention, which deliberated in Moscow during that same period, 1949, formulated identical principles in its resolution on the organizational question, explicitly saying:[10]

> ". . . At the present time the Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia and White Russia exist as separate Soviet republics. This is how the

[8] E. B. Genkina, *The Formation of the U.S.S.R.*, 2nd ed., Moscow, 1947, p.40.
[9] Y. M. Sverdlov, *Selected Articles and Speeches*, 1917-1919, Leningrad, 1939, pp. 162f.
[10] *Eighth Convention of the Russian Communist Party*, Moscow, 1919, p. 367.

problem of the form in which the *state* is to exist is solved at the moment. . . .

"This by no means implies that the Russian Communist Party in turn has to organize on the basis of a federation of independent Communist parties.

"RESOLVED by the Eighth Convention of the Russian Communist Party: There must exist *one unitary* centralized Communist Party with one unitary Central Committee. . . . All decisions of the Russian Communist Party and of its directing bodies are unconditionally binding upon all divisions of the Party regardless of the divisions' national composition. The Central Committees of the Ukrainian, Latvian, Lithuanian Communists enjoy the legal status of regional committees of the Party and are wholly subordinated to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party."

Thus the resolution made subject to Moscow control—"unconditionally" and "wholly"—the national Communist leadership in the Ukraine, Latvia and Lithuania, countries not even included at that time in the federal Soviet state. As a matter of fact, the resolution was adopted in March, 1919, while federal ties between the R.S.F.S.R. and the other Soviet republics were not established before June, 1919.

Party by-laws voted by the Eighth Party Conference in December, 1919 once more emphasized that Communist parties in the individual national republics were to be "wholly subordinated to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party." This basic law of the party organization was revised in 1922 and 1926, but the clause stipulating the national units' complete subjection to the Central Committee in Moscow was rigidly maintained. The 1926 revision brought a still harsher innovation—requiring the approval of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. for the election of the national Communist parties' executive boards, the so-called praesidiums or bureaus of their respective Central Committees.

The dependence of the national parties on the Central Committee in Moscow was stipulated in somewhat more lenient terms when party by-laws again were revised in 1934 and 1936. This did not mean that the national parties had been granted a greater degree of independence, nor did it imply any change in the organizational policy of the C.P.S.U. Rigidity on paper apparently was no longer needed as no one could possibly have had any doubts left as to the absolute control exercised

by the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. over the central bodies of the national Communist parties, and through the latter, over the entire government machinery of the national republics.

WHILE IN the field of nationality rights there was continuous retrogression from the very moment that the Bolsheviks came to power, the treatment granted national culture moved in the opposite direction. In theory, the attitude of pure negation as formulated by Lenin still prevailed. It is worth while to quote here the founder of Bolshevism, who in 1913 declared:

> "Advanced workers have realized that the slogan 'national culture' is a clerical and bourgeois fraud—regardless of whether the Great-Russian, the Ukrainian, the Jewish, the Polish, the Georgian or any other culture is meant. . . . In general it is only the clericals or the bourgeois who speak of national culture. The toiling classes can only speak of the international culture of the world-wide labor movement. Only such a culture implies complete, real, sincere equality of nations, absence of national oppression, realization of democracy. . . ." (Vol. XVI, p. 618.)

This doctrinal approach, however, had a dangerous effect. The predominantly Russian officials in regions inhabited by national minorities were prone to display lack of interest and even contempt for cultural cravings and achievements of the native population, and frequently behaved not unlike the Tsarist agents of "Great-Russian" chauvinism, which caused discontent and considerable unrest. Communist leadership early realized the danger and took on the fight against this national revolution in reverse. This in turn involved active support of economic and cultural improvements of the condition of minority nationalities, especially the more backward ones.

The practical development was ahead of the official theoretical thought, which for a long time stuck to the simplistic formula of Leninist cosmopolitanism, according to which fostering of national cultures was tantamount to impeding the advance of internationalism and the growth of cultural inter-relationships between nations. It was not until 1925 that the formula was replaced by new slogans presented by Stalin himself. Addressing students of the University of the Peoples of the East on May 18, 1925, Stalin said:

> "Proletarian in content and national in form—such is the universal human culture towards which socialism is marching. Prole-

> tarian culture does not cancel national culture, but lends it content. National culture, on the other hand, does not cancel proletarian culture, but lends it form. The demand for national culture was a bourgeois demand so long as the bourgeoisie was in power and the consolidation of nations proceeded under the aegis of the bourgeois system. The demand for national culture became a proletarian demand when the proletariat came into power and the consolidation of nations began to proceed under the aegis of Soviet government. . . ." ("Works," Vol. VII, p. 138).

Since Stalin's formula was announced in the mid-1920's, the cultural development of national minorities has been continuously and persistently sponsored.

With particular insistence Communist leadership pointed out that the specific "backwardness" which kept Russia's minority peoples on a low social and cultural level—this in the first place applied to several Turki peoples in Central Asia—was largely due to an archaic, pre-capitalist, semi-nomadic economy, and that cultural improvements must wait upon structural changes in the economic set-up. The resolution on the "nationality problem" passed by the Tenth Party Convention (March, 1921) advocated "transition of the native toiling masses from backward economic forms to higher forms—from a nomadic life to agriculture, from guild handicrafts working for the open market to *artels* (producers' coöps) working for the Soviet state (the semi-proletarian artisans to be drawn into trade unions), from *artel* handicraft production to factory production, from small husbandry to the planned collective cultivation of the soil."

From the early 1920's on, great efforts were made to help industrialize minority-inhabited backward regions. When, by the end of the 1920's, the Five-Year Plan policy was inaugurated, the economic modernization of regions with an archaic economy and the accelerated industrialization of remote areas with a predominantly non-Russian population were proclaimed the prime objectives of the Soviets in the field of nationality problems. The motives were hardly in the realm of "nationality policies" alone. Speeded-up changes in the economic structure were determined by the general trend towards intensified domestic industrial expansion; they were aimed at shifting the "frontier" of an up-to-date economy to the south-east and east.

In terms of nationality policies this meant that various national and ethnic groups, including some semi-nomadic and nomadic tribes, living under the most primitive conditions and in complete ignorance of modern industrial technology, were to gain access to industrial civilization and highly mechanized production. The entire pattern of living and working was to be changed for millions of people, and this certainly was not possible without great educational efforts and cultural improvements.

Whatever the underlying motives, the Communist Party promoted and developed immense cultural activities and was spectacularly successful in raising the cultural level of backward national groups. Native languages were introduced in the local administration and in the courts (Russian remaining the official language for those who wanted to use it, which made bilingualism mandatory for public servants). "Natives" were employed in governmental and public institutions, and strenuous efforts were exerted to draw them into the ranks of the Communist Party and especially of the Communist Youth organization. General use of native languages was made, wherever possible, mandatory in the schools. (Learning Russian, however, was made mandatory in all schools—with a more or less extensive curriculum depending on grade and type of school). Much was done to foster the development of native literature and native art.

What delayed the cultural advance of minority nationalities in these fields was certainly not restraining or obstructive influence from above, for there was none. The main obstacle was in the shortage of sufficiently educated national personnel for a smooth functioning of universal elementary education, and for the setting up of secondary schools and institutions of higher learning conducted in the native language (and at the same time teaching the obligatory Russian).[11]

The last pre-war decade saw in many republics a notable development of a national theatre. Important scholarly institutions were brought into being, including national branches of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, and national academies of sciences. Active and accelerated

---

[11] Detailed material on the legal status of native languages during the first decade of Soviet rule is to be found in V. N. Durdenevskii, *Legal Equality of Languages in the Soviet System,* Moscow, 1927.

development of economic resources created favorable conditions for a soaring advance of national cultures.

THE RISE of national cultures certainly was not a painless process. It met with grave difficulties and engendered far-reaching contradictions and open conflicts. Among the minority nationalities the spread of literacy, education and cultural achievements vigorously stimulated the growth of national consciousness and the release of new social energies. This insistently called for outlets in the direction of national self-government and democratic institutions—something the Soviet Government would not permit.

Time and again frictions developed which culminated in acute conflicts, especially with those nationalities which already in Tsarist days had given birth to national liberation movements and for decades had borne the brunt of the fight for the freedom of nationalities. Outstanding among these were the Ukrainians, and the government's fight against "Ukrainian nationalism" repeatedly shook the Ukrainian Communist Party, underlay the widespread disaffection during the Soviet-Nazi war, and still is far from coming to an end. Also outstanding in this respect were the Georgians, whose independence Soviet Russia destroyed by crude force in 1921. They have a long history of difficulty; after having been incorporated into the Soviet State, they revolted again and again, and their resistance to Soviet oppression has for years created unrest in Stalin's native country.

During the early years of Soviet rule the central government repeatedly clashed with the peoples of Central Asia. These frictions, however, seemed to subside after a while. Among backward nationalities whose national awakening began under the Soviet system (and was either initiated or consistently stimulated by the Soviet Government itself), administration policy directed at cultural improvements and economic change found more enthusiastic support and failed to result in notable frictions.

But, at a later stage, a struggle of a different nature affected minority nationalities. In the mid-1930's, the Communist Party and the country in its entirety were faced with a crucial decision: Either to direct all fundamental social and economic processes into democratic

channels and gradually free social and political life from the fetters of dictatorship, or to tighten the pressure and make the system of domination thoroughly totalitarian. The rulers chose the latter. The ultimate triumph of the totalitarian power machine was symbolized by the social and political elimination, and partly the physical annihilation, of the overwhelming majority of those who had been more or less prominently active in the early Soviet period and who stood or could possibly stand for the revolution's progressive, democratic tendencies.

The purge hit the leadership elite of minority nationalities with particular brutality and fury. Among these national groups the cultural awakening inevitably, automatically, as it were, generated a longing for independent, creative national development and thus kindled democratic tendencies militating in favor of a gradual loosening of the manacles of dictatorial rule. The entire political, social and cultural elite of these nationalities, which had grown up in the revolutionary period, longed for free national development and, hence, democratization of the dictatorial state. From the point of view of a totalitarian dictatorship all these national leaders of minority peoples were unreliable, a menace to the state. The purge here assumed the character of wholesale destruction (or elimination) of the only available national elite. The annihilation was all-embracing and all-inclusive.[12]

One example will illustrate the extent of the ravages perpetrated among the minority nationality elites. In 1935, preparations were made for drafting the new, "democratic" Soviet Constitution. With Stalin acting as chairman, a drafting committee of 30 was formed, on which served the most outstanding and influential Communist leaders, the Soviet "founding fathers," among whom were included 10 eminent representatives of national minority peoples. The Soviet Union at that time had seven Union Republics, so, of course, their Central Executive Committee chairmen, who also were the "presidents" of the Soviet Union as co-chairmen of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R., were included. Besides Mikhail I. Kalinin, who represented the R.S.F.S.R., there were six "presidents" of the non-Russian national republics. Their ranks were reinforced by four more representatives of

[12] In greater detail the story of the annihilation of national elites is told in my articles in the Russian-language periodical, *Courier Socialiste,* Paris, 1937, Nos. 17-18 and 19.

non-Russian nations. Thus, the list of the non-Russian "founding fathers" read:

Petrovski	C.E.C. chairman, Ukraine
Chervyakov	C.E.C. chairman, White Russia
Aitakov	C.E.C. chairman, Turkmen S.S.R.
Musabekov	C.E.C. chairman, Transcaucasian Federation
Rakhimbayev	C.E.C. chairman, Tadzhik S.S.R.
Khojayev	C.E.C. chairman, Uzbek S.S.R.
Goloded	Chairman, Council of People's Commissars, White Russia
Lyubchenko	Chairman, Council of People's Commissars, Ukraine
Ikramov	First Secretary, Central Committee, Comunist Party, Uzbekistan
Yerbanov	First Secretary, Communist Party, Buryat-Mongolia

On December 5, 1936, the day the Stalin Constitution was adopted, the ten were at the height of power and glory. By 1937, all of them, with the exception of Petrovski—who quietly disappeared from politics somewhat later—were branded "enemies" and "spies," and either simply "vanished" or were driven to suicide (Chervyakov, Goloded, Lyubchenko), or were shot. But, remember, these were only the most prominent among thousands of victims the purge has claimed in the national minority sector!

THE PURGES deprived the minority nationalities of that dynamic elite which had risen to prominence in the 1920's and early 1930's. The whole stratum of the national *intelligentsia* that throve in the atmosphere of national *risorgimento,* that had been inspired by the emancipatory spirit of the revolution, was wiped out. A new "elite" was forced upon the minority peoples, an "elite" which had come to maturity under the dictatorship and therefore had been taught to obey authority and to distrust independent thought.

Social and cultural aspirations of minority nationalities were dealt so severe a blow that the effects were still strongly felt when the Soviet Union was drawn into World War II. What then happened was revealing. The Soviet press did not cease repeating that the nationality policies of the Soviet Government had borne rich fruit, that all peoples

of the Soviet Union had proven united in repelling the enemy's assault. But this only partly fitted the facts. The multi-national front showed weak spots and appalling ruptures. Some national groups were still suffering from the destructive events of 1937 and 1938, and their loyalty to the Soviet State had worn quite thin.

In June, 1945 the Supreme Soviet of the Russian S.F.S.R. was convened for the first time since the outbreak of the war. The budget submitted to the Supreme Soviet hinted at peculiar war casualties among the autonomous national administrations. Ordinarily, appropriations for all autonomous republics which are part of the R.S.F.S.R. are included in the budget. But in this first post-war budget several units were no longer listed. Not only the Volga-German Autonomous S.S.R. had vanished—this was no surprise as the German population had been deported early in the war and the disbandment of the republic was occasionally mentioned later—but also missing were the Kalmuck and Chechen-Ingush republics. And, finally, a fourth one, the binational republic of the Kabards and Balkars, had apparently been cut to pieces, and only a rump Kabard republic appeared in the budget.[13]

No reasons were asked for or given. The very fact of the disappearance of several national autonomous units, the preservation of which is guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution, was not so much as mentioned during Supreme Soviet debates. Only a year later—in June, 1946—did the Supreme Soviet pass a law confirming decisions of its Praesidium which had not been referred to before, and the dates and details of which were not given (and have not been given since). The law disbanded the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous S.S.R. and demoted the Crimean Autonomous S.S.R. (still listed as such in the 1945 budget) from the rank of an autonomous republic to that of a province without autonomy status. What had caused this decision to be made was stated in one single paragraph. It read:[14]

> "Many Chechen and Crimean Tatars joined, at the behest of German agents, volunteer detachments organized by the Germans, and conducted, in coöperation with the German troops, an armed fight against Red Army formations; they also, following the German order, set up diversionist bands for the purpose of fighting the Soviet

[13] *Izvestiya,* June 10, 1945.
[14] *Pravda,* June 28, 1946.

> Government behind the lines, and in this the bulk of the population of the Chechen-Ingush and Crimean Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republics failed to oppose these traitors to the homeland."

No mention was made of the abolition of the Kalmuck Autonomous S.S.R. or of any reasons for taking such action; nor was anything said about the transformation of the Autonomous S.S.R. of the Kabards and Balkars into the Kabardinian A.S.S.R.—neither at that time nor at any later date.

These are festering wounds, and it will take time to heal them, all the more since the growing Russian nationalism, clearly furthered by the Government since 1945, does not facilitate the socio-psychological recovery of minority nationalities. However, the pre-war course of furthering the advance of those nationalities probably will be continued. But then, again, the rise of national minority groups is bound to produce specifically "national" democratic trends which will clash with the totalitarian dictatorship's anti-democratic, oppressive power policy. Conflicts which came to the fore in 1937 and which in a different way made themselves menacingly felt during the war, are apt to reappear again and again. Government action confined to the field of "nationality policy" is not likely to provide a solution, for these conflicts arise not from national frictions but from the basic contradictions of the Soviet totalitarian system.

SOME RECENT ATTEMPTS AT 'MEANING'
The Definitions of Russell, Cassirer and Kolman

By Paul Kecskemeti

THE TENTH International Congress of Philosophy, held last August in Amsterdam, impressively demonstrated the divided state in which philosophy finds itself today. No hint of a common philosophical "climate" emerged; the various contributions made by metaphysicians, mathematical logicians, empiricists and existentialists read like soliloquies. To judge by the Proceedings of the Conference, no serious attempt was made by the representatives of the different philosophical schools to valuate one another's point of view, to review it in the light of one's own categories.

Thus, Western philosophy presented a spectacle of complete atomization. It was, however, this very atomization which created a curious, over-rarefied atmosphere of brotherhood. The philosophers of the West may have spoken in different tongues—but at least they respected one another's integrity of purpose. They disagreed, but they did not doubt that each was seeking the truth according to his own lights. Thus agreeing to disagree, the Western philosophers seemed far more intent upon sharpening and refining their concepts, and accentuating their divisions, than upon securing some broad agreement on generalities.

But there were not only Western philosophers present at the Congress. Soviet Russia, to be sure, although invited, sent no representatives, but a few spokesmen of the new "people's democracies" did arrive from countries behind the Iron Curtain. Their presence afforded the philosophers of the West an opportunity to hear something about the obligatory official philosophical doctrine of the Soviet sphere: dialectical materialism.

Actually, no detailed exposition of the doctrine was given. What came nearest to a statement of the dialectical principle was contained in a lectur given by the veteran dialection Bela Fogarasi, of Hungary, who had taken part in Bela Kun's regime in 1919 and spent most of the

intervening period in Moscow. Fogarasi stressed the opposition between "Aristotelian logic" and "dialectics," and went on to say that modern mathematical logic, too, was merely a re-formulation of Aristotelian logic and hence inadequate. A philosophy which wants to remain abreast of "the tendencies and advances of contemporary science" must, above all, shed the principle of contradiction. In true, that is to say, dialectical logic, no contradiction can be absolute; two sentences may be contradictory within a given "field of significance" but cease to be contradictory when viewed within a different (wider or narrower) field of significance. It is up to science to pass beyond the relative contradictions supposed to exist between A and non-A, p and not-p.

All this is extremely vague, but one thing is certain: if this view is accepted, logic ceases to be the supreme arbiter of the formal truth (or correctness) of scientific theories, and the road is clear to introduce another supreme arbiter, the wisdom of the Party. In this connection, the fact becomes significant that a number of Polish logicians who are greatly esteemed by their Western colleagues and sent papers to the Congress were refused permission to attend in person. Another straw in the wind was the stand taken by some Hungarian logicians who did attend: they commented on the "philosophical consequences" of Goedel's theorem according to which it can be proved that within any mathematical system, one can formulate questions which cannot be answered within that system. Since, the Hungarian argument runs, the human mind cannot accept the existence of "insoluble" questions, it is clear that one must go beyond mathematical logic, and embrace dialectical materialism.

This denunciation of mathematical logic, however, played only a secondary role in the contributions made by the philosophers of the "people's democracies." The keynote speaker of the group, A. Kolman of Prague, mainly sought to identify dialectical materialism as the "new humanism." "Our age," he said, "put in the vanguard of fighters for new humanism the Slavonic nations, which gave to the world mainly the glorious humanists of the great Russian nation." The humanism of the past "has not known the real power which would be able to realize it, whereas the new doctrine of humanism, created by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin take it utterly into account" (the grammar makes no sense, but we know where we stand).

Kolman seemed mainly anxious to win adherents for some united front, regardless of doctrinal differences. "All true partisans of the optimistic world view," he pleaded, "all adherents of humanism, all who are convinced that the human progress will win, can and must unite on this programme . . . the differences of opinion, existing between the philosophical points of view of different schools and trends, will move into the background."

What the programme of the new humanism was remained somewhat vague, but it manifestly involved stiff, militant action. The humanists, Kolman said, "must unanimously fight the parasitary rapacious principle, the symbol of which is the abdomen, the worst enemy of man, mankind and humanity."

CURIOUS indeed: at the Congress, the Western thinkers appeared seriously committed to sharply defined principles, whereas the spokesmen of the totalitarian East were breezily latitudinarian. Of course, the paradox vanishes if we look closer. The Westerners still can afford to hold convictions merely on the strength of some inner sense of evidence, regardless of what others may think, whereas the Easterners at this point are mainly anxious to enroll as many people as possible in some co-ordinated action on their side. In order to swell the ranks, they are content to present a minimum program, and to play down the full content of their doctrine.

But the Eastern latitudinarianism is no real tolerance. Possibly Kolman did not mean seriously his ringing denunciation of the abdomen, apparently the first part of the human organism which is to be purged. But the denunciation of logic by his colleagues from the East was clear in its implications. Once the regime has taken over, the philosophers are quickly reminded of their doctrinal obligations to the glorious humanists of the great Russian nation.

On the other hand, needless to say, Western individualism has nothing to do with intolerance. At its best, the quest for evidence springs from a sense of responsibility for establishing a foundation on which human beings can agree about things without resorting to violence or indoctrination. At its worst, it degenerates into an "ivory tower" attitude which ignores the practical problem of philosophy: that of emancipating human action from guidance by irrational and inhuman pres-

sures. At the Congress, some of the representatives of the West, anxious to avoid anything that might antagonize the Soviet supporters, refused to take a clear stand on this issue. (On this melancholy aspect of the Congress, see Sidney Hook's illuminating article in the March issue of *Partisan Review.*)

One of the high points of the Amsterdam Congress was Bertrand Russell's lecture on "Postulates of Scientific Inference." In this lecture Russell surprised his empiricist friends by maintaining that science necessarily makes use of certain forms of inference which are based neither on deductive logic nor on induction by simple enumeration.

A full statement of Russell's theory of scientific knowledge is contained in his latest book, to the examination of which we now turn.

II

IN *HUMAN KNOWLEDGE, Its Scope and Limits* (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1948) Russell examines and rejects, not the empiricist outlook as such, but the empiricist theory of knowledge. He says that if we assume, with the empiricist philosophers, that we know only what experience tells us, we shall be forced to deny that the findings of science constitute knowledge—because these findings cannot be totally derived from experiential data, manipulated by deductive logic.

Russell's train of thought is amazingly reminiscent of the general drift of Kant's theory of knowledge. Kant, like Russell, started from an examination of Hume's skepticism. He argued that if Hume is right, Newtonian physics cannot be considered as valid knowledge; but the validity of physical theory cannot be questioned in earnest; hence Hume cannot be right. Russell's theory of scientific inference says essentially the same thing. Many philosophers before Kant tried to refute skepticism; but Kant was the first to argue that philosophy can and must overcome skepticism because it has to account for the validity of scientific knowledge (this validity being postulated as a fact). Russell now rediscovered this principle which Kant called that of the "transcendental" method.

This is the more strange as Russell has no particular respect for Kant; in the *History of Western Philosophy* the latter comes off as a rather third-rate thinker. For Russell, the quarrel with Hume and the empiricists is a small matter, an argument among friends concerning

certain flaws of detail the correction of which does not entail any major modification of the basic empiricist approach; but Kant belongs to the enemy camp, idealism. And Russell still views idealism with a kind of moral horror, as something not only false but basely fraudulent and hypocritical. I think that Russell's moral abhorrence of idealism prevents him from clearly understanding the idealist position in epistemology, and from realizing that his own present stand is in fact a sort of Kantian, "transcendental" idealism.

The *Theory of Human Knowledge* suffers greatly from the fact that Russell does not realize the idealist implications of his position. He thinks that his non-empirical "postulates of scientific inference" can exist side by side with a purely mechanistic theory of perception and speech. He maintains that "mental events" do not basically differ from "physical events"—the only difference between the two being that mental events take place inside an organism's brain, so that the organism can become aware of them directly, whereas physical events occur outside the organism, so that the latter can become aware of them only via the mental events with which they are causally connected. In themselves, the mental events represent the same sort of occurrence as the physical events. Perception as well as all responses to which it leads—including speech responses—can, in principle, be explained by the laws of physics and chemistry. I shall try to show that this theory of mental events and of speech is inconsistent with Russell's critique of empiricism.

According to Russell, we speak because some stimulation from the outside (and we may add: possibly at times some inner stimulation) releases a conditioned chain reflex, established by pure physical causality, terminating in some movements of the speech organs. Using as an example the case of a man who receives a telegram informing him that his property was destroyed, Russell says: "It seems probable that if you had a sufficiently minute knowledge of his brain structure, and if you were a sufficiently good mathematician, you could foretell that when the shapes making the message came into his field of vision they would set up a process ending in certain movements of his mouth, to wit, those producing the sounds which we represent in writing as 'I am ruined.' It is here assumed that you could make this prophecy without knowing English . . ." (p. 42).

On the other hand, physical events are known only by the mediation of the mental events connected with them through a causal chain: this is what is meant by saying that physics is an empirical science. ". . . if physics is an empirical science . . . then physics must be supplemented by laws connecting stimulus and sensation. Now such laws belong to psychology. Therefore what is empirically verifiable is not pure physics in isolation, but physics plus a department of psychology. Psychology, accordingly, is an essential ingredient in every part of empirical science" (p. 49). Thus, we obtain the odd result that no science can be stated without the help of psychology, except psychology as the science of human behavior which can be fully expressed in terms of physics alone.

THE FIRST objection to this analysis is that it shirks the crucial issue—that of the "awareness" of "mental events." According to Russell, visual stimulation of the brain is the same kind of process as the one which takes place in a photographic film,—except that we can be immediately aware of the former because it takes place in our own brain. All right, but what about this "awareness" itself? What is this thing which is not only stimulated, but is "aware" of being stimulated? If the process going on within the organism is the same as the one going on in a photographic plate, then we need a mysterious soul-substance to register it, if we want to account for our awareness of it. On the other hand, if we want to do without the soul-substance, then we must conclude that the process in the organism differs in certain essential respects from that in the photographic film.

The second and more vital objection to Russell's analysis is that it makes his whole undertaking, the critique of scientific knowledge, unintelligible. We not only have mental data of which we are aware; we also arrange them in various patterns, we make inferences about them, and we ask how these inferences can be made self-consistent. All this, however, presupposes a use of language which goes radically beyond the mechanical process which Russell describes. That whole process can be comprehended by someone who does not know English. But if we are to argue about the correctness of our theories, we must know each other's language. This sort of discussion cannot bypass the *meaning* of words.

Meanings represent a new departure, because—contrary to Russell's pure "conditioned reflex" theory of language—they cannot be fully stated in terms of what happens. What matters is how the thing which happens—*e.g.,* certain actual movements of the speech organs of people—is related to certain previously stated rules and exigencies. In taking cognizance of meanings, we must correlate events and rules. How these rules come into being and how they are applied is a question into which I cannot go into at this point; suffice it to say that, far from being entirely forced upon man by the objective environment, they are in part man's original contribution. This is the part of truth contained in the idealistic theory of knowledge (as distinct from metaphysical idealism).

Russell's five "postulates of scientific inference," which in themselves amount to a very valuable contribution to the analysis of causality and induction, must also be understood as describing an original venture of the human mind rather than as something imposed upon our consciousness by the mechanism of stimulation. His theory of knowledge as a whole, however, falls apart, because he never squarely faces the question how man can be subjected to the blind mechanism of the various causal patterns which embrace him, and at the same time be free enough to apply the yardstick of validity and consistency to his beliefs.

To philosophers who belong to the empiricist tradition, the problem of finding a place for meaning and value in a world of fact (to use Wolfgang Koehler's formulation) always presents a great difficulty. On their premises, the best way out seems to be pragmatism. The "success" achieved by the organism trying to master its environment is the standard in terms of which we can discuss the "truth" and other values of our beliefs.

Whether pragmatism can do justice to the question raised by Russell—that of the assumptions we must make if we want to account for the validity of scientific knowledge—is somewhat doubtful. At any rate, philosophers who come from the idealist tradition do not have the same difficulties on this score, for they start with the "mind" as a basic datum which by its very nature involves meaning and value. If this departure is taken, however, the inverse difficulty will arise—that of accounting for stubborn facts, for the blind mechanism which simply asserts itself. It is when they come face to face with this end of the

problem that idealist philosophers become embarrassed and resort to doubtful constructions and hypotheses.

III

THE APPEARANCE of the volume on *The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer* in the Library of Living Philosophers, edited by Paul Arthur Schilpp (The Library of Living Philosophers, Inc., Evanston, Ill.) provides an opportunity for indicating how Ernst Cassirer—perhaps the last representative of the authentic Kantian tradition—approached this problem of securing the moorings by which the value framework of idealist philosophy can be anchored to empirical reality. The pragmatists use the concept of "success in the environment" as a bridge by which they can escape from the realm of fact into that of value. Cassirer, who moves in the inverse direction, needs a concept which would lead him from the world of value to that of fact. The concept which fulfills this function for him is that of "symbol."

"Symbol" is, to begin with, a frankly "mental" object. And science describes the world by means of symbols. Now Cassirer, a true Kantian, accepts the validity of science as a fact; he merely wants to account for it. But how can this be done? It cannot be done, Cassirer holds, by comparing the symbolic representation with the brute fact, untouched by any symbolic manipulation, because we can never escape from the charmed circle of our symbols. Anything we examine is by that very fact brought within the compass of our symbolic apparatus. Hence, we can never find out how far science "represents" a reality which is mere stubborn factuality. However, we can go beyond science in another direction. We can observe the non-scientific kinds of symbols and their uses. Here we have empirical reality which in a way escapes the hold of the symbols of science. Accordingly, Cassirer undertook an exploration of the whole realm of symbolism. He examined the "symbolic forms" of language, myth, art. Thus he gained a panoramic view of human culture as a whole. And, he asked himself, could one go further than that? Was there any reality beyond the symbolic forms? Cassirer was convinced that this was impossible by definition. A philosophy which was merely a philosophy of nature and natural science was bound to be incomplete; but there could be no philosophy fuller and more universal than the philosophy of culture.

By this conclusion, it seems to me, Kantian idealism inflicted a truly ironical defeat upon itself. Philosophy was to be given a master concept all its own: the very essence of mental creativity. But when the tool was applied, all that could be done with it was the analysis of empirical cultural reality. Of course, Cassirer wrote about language and myth as a true philosopher. But taking the world as its province, philosophy in his hands remained without a province of its own. While the empiricist Russell was driven by his method to assert idealist principles, the idealist Cassirer finally made the empirical subject matter the master of his philosophical quest.

The Cassirer volume of the Library of Living Philosophers maintains the high standard of excellence of that series. The various contributions not only elucidate every aspect of Cassirer's thinking but also represent notable philosophical achievements in themselves. The volume came unfortunately too late to present Cassirer as a "living" philosopher, but reminiscences contributed by friends and pupils make it a fitting memorial of a great thinker, scholar and humanist.

SOVIET CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

From a Russian Prison Diary

By Julius Margolin

The Crime

A RESIDENT of Palestine, although still a Polish citizen, I came to Poland in the summer of 1939 to visit my relatives. The war found me in Lodz. After various wanderings in an effort to escape abroad via Rumania, I came to Pinsk, which was then under Soviet occupation. I stayed with relatives. I felt safe. I was certain that a Polish Jew had no reason to fear the Soviet Government, which was well-known for its tolerant attitude towards Jews. Politically, I represented no threat to the U.S.S.R.; on the contrary, I was full of sympathy and understanding towards the Boshevik experiment in Russia. And, in fact, I was soon given a job in the Department of Education.

But on June 19, 1940, the All-Russian Communist Party entered my room in the person of a snub-nosed young man. "You are requested by the police for a half-hour," he informed me. When I began to pack my valise he smiled, but advised me to take my coat as the day was a cool one. And so, in my summer suit, with a coat over my arm, I followed the young Communist, never suspecting that at that moment I was crossing a borderline which divided me from an entirely different world, a world from which I emerged only five years later. . . .

After weeks of detention in a crowded cellar amidst incredible dirt and rudeness, I was finally called by the N.K.V.D. for questioning. Bearded and covered with a thick crust of dirt after weeks without soap, razor, towel or water for washing, I sat on a chair in the middle of a room before a young, elegant, clean and perfumed N.K.V.D. interrogating officer. After an interminably long and senseless interrogation, during which I vainly tried to discover what was wanted of me, the official declared: "You have been placed under arrest for infraction of the passport law."—"But permit me," I objected indignantly, "I have a Polish passport, and I duly reported it to the police."—"Pre-

cisely. You have a passport of a non-existent state. There is no more Poland."—"But that is not my fault? I received the passport at a time when Poland was recognized by the U.S.S.R. and all other nations."—"It is not your fault, nevertheless you have broken our passport law. This is the Soviet Union, and you have an invalid passport."—"And what is to be done to me for this crime of which, as you have just admitted yourself, I am not guilty?"—"You will be sentenced to a year at forced labor."

I was stunned by the absurdity and cruelty of such "justice." But the official lied to me. I was sentenced not to one but to *five* years of forced labor for my grave offense. And even the general amnesty granted to Polish citizens under the Stalin-Sikorsky agreement in the autumn of 1941 did not free me. I served the full term of my sentence in the Soviet slave labor camps, under conditions so harrowing, so unimaginable, that, had anyone told me about them before my imprisonment, I would have refused to believe that such things existed in the twentieth century.

Arrival

THE TRAIN moved slowly through the forest. Endless birches, pines, firs slid past us in the light of the August sun. Woods, clearings, swamps and wet plains gave way to each other in dreary succession. The melancholy landscape was somehow reminiscent of White Russia, but here it was far more desolate and everything seemed to lie under the shadow of some wild, brooding gloom. A lonely, God-forsaken land. At every turn our little locomotive blew its shrill whistle, and on the signs along the track we read the unintelligible warning: "Close your ash-pit!" At length blockhouses began to appear among the trees—rough structures built of logs. We felt that this was no ordinary forest and no ordinary country. Although we traveled for a long time, there were no stations, no names, no traces of peaceful habitation. At one stop we saw an old Uzbek with a white beard and a withered Mongolian face. How did an Uzbek find his way to the Karelo-Finnish forests? "Grandpa!" someone called to him from our platform, "what is the name of this town?" The Uzbek turned his face and looked at us with extinguished eyes: "What town are you talking about?" he said with grieved astonishment, "do you think you've come to a *town?* This is a *camp!*"

I recalled the opening lines of Dante's "Inferno":

"In the middle of the journey of our life
I came to myself in a dark wood. . . ."

It was the strangest wood, inhabited by an astonishing variety of people—Uzbeks, Poles, Chinese, Ukrainians, Georgians, Tartars, Germans. At one point we passed a clearing where a group of about forty men stood, watching with curiosity the train carrying "novices." They were the inhabitants of this wood, and we looked at them with equal curiosity. Both sides had enough to wonder at. We were "foreigners," immediately recognizable by our yellow and green suitcases, our coats, our shirts of every color, our European shoes and different suits. How rich we were, how multi-colored and unlike one another! We had never realized this until we saw the forest inhabitants.

They were men of mouse-gray color. All their clothing was mouse-gray: queer nondescript jerkins, long tattered rags, shapeless clod-hoppers on bare feet, mouse-gray caps with long ear-flaps flying apart and lending their faces a weird expression. And the faces were also mouse-gray, earthy, as if covered by a layer of dust. Everything they wore was ill-fitting and clumsy—either too wide and long, or too short and narrow. They all clung together, and apart from them stood a man with a gun, dressed in a military uniform and obviously belonging to a "different race."

Such were the denizens of this forest! It was difficult to imagine that we had anything in common with them. For two hours now the train had been moving deeper into the mysterious N.K.V.D. forest. Suddenly we stopped on a siding, and a minute later a train rushed past us at top speed. A mouse-gray engineer leaned out of the locomotive, and behind him a black-faced fireman. On the first platform there were men with guns—guards. On the others—people in picturesque groups, as if all set for movie cameras. Muscular bodies, extraordinary faces, fierce and hard as if made of bronze or stone. Some were lying prone, with outflung arms, others stood firmly, with widely planted feet, the wind tearing at the coats thrown over their shoulders. Still others sat or kneeled, looking aside. In their hands they carried axes, picks, and pointed stakes, and their helmets still bore traces of the Soviet stars that had been torn from them. The train rushed past—a train of troglodytes,

seeming to carry men of the stone age, shaggy savages—and we understood that these people were returning from very hard labor. Their bodies and poses expressed profound relaxation after recent superhuman efforts or feats, as if they were returning from battle, after an attack, and were awaiting further battle. This whole train of gladiators seemed charged with stern and primitive energy, and on the last platform, at the rear, were again the men with guns. The train emerged from the forest like an apparition and vanished instantly.

"A brigade of loaders going to the fifth *lagpunkt!* (camp unit)," said one of our guards and laughed.

We arrived at the destination assigned to us.

The Camp

I LANDED in the so-called "48th square," a camp unit of medium size. There were 1,050 of us, and the basic work there was lumbering.

The old-timers used to tell how the "48th square" had been built. In 1937, when a huge wave of millions of prisoners surged northward, there was nothing as yet in that spot. Through the rigors of winter people lived in the forest in tents, spent nights at the camp bonfire in the snow, without food or medicine. Those who first came here have all perished: the "48th square," like other forced labor camps, rests on a foundation of human bones! Men froze or starved to death. One half of the Georgians and Kazakhs—natives of warm southern regions—died in the course of one winter. Out of a group of 500 persons, only 250 remained. The man who told me this—a Georgian from the Batum region—was, after three years of camp life, a broken man, an invalid doomed to die. All the other members of his group had perished in the forests of the Onega region.

The prisoners cleared the forest. Huge uprooted tree stumps and roots are scattered everywhere like monstrous octopuses or enormous dead spiders with their crooked wooden tentacles sticking out. On a nasty day in the fall these roots, torn out and strewn along the way, lend the camp an air of mute and agonizing despair, and in some way remind one of the living beings crawling about among them.

But even at the time we arrived there, life for the prisoners in the

"48th square" was extremely hard. Work in the forest was carried on under very difficult conditions, which were entirely beyond the strength of a city dweller unaccustomed to great physical exertion.

Living conditions in the camp call for a detailed description. If one were to try to sum them up briefly, they could be boiled down to the following: physical work beyond one's strength under conditions defying human endurance, with altogether insufficient nourishment (black bread and thin soup once a day); complete absence of warm clothing and shoes; insufficient sleep in overcrowded, poorly heated barracks on two-tiered bunks, without bed linen and frequently without blankets, not to mention pillows, mattresses or even straw. People return from work dead tired, completely drenched, with wet feet (there are no boots or galoshes, only tarpaulin slippers and rags, and, more rarely, felt boots), half-frozen hands (there are no warm mittens). Without the possibility of undressing, of drying themselves or washing up, the tired men flop down on the bare wooden bunks in their wet clothes and thus sink into a heavy, troubled sleep which does not afford them any real rest.

The entire system of medical aid, whether deliberately or not, inexorably worked so that within a year or two the average prisoner—who is not endowed with especial adaptability or tenacity—is inevitably converted into a physical wreck. Some of them lose their capacity to produce that minimum of the "norm" which is required for obtaining their rations, and they are then transferred into the category of the *"dokhodyagi"* ("last milers")—a dreadful new word coined in the U.S.S.R. camps to designate prisoners to whom nothing is left but to die slowly of complete exhaustion—to walk their last mile. I was myself a "last-miler," and only a miracle saved me. So I know what I am talking about.

But not all prisoners live under the same conditions. In this cemetery for the living, in this twentieth century "Dead-House" there is the same kind of stratification as in the U.S.S.R. on the other side of the barbed wire fence. There are many categories here which take on the character of "classes" of a sort; the difference, for instance, between a prisoner in charge of the kitchen and one who fells trees in the forest is, from a human standpoint, greater than the difference between a millionaire and a bootblack in New York.

SPRING CAME to the "48th Square." The snow became soggy, unable to hold the sleighs; it would give way when trod upon. We used to go to work through clearings and at every step we would sink to above our knees, forced to wade as if through a small river, plunging our feet into the slush and pulling them out again, the water going plop-plop underneath. At night the frost still held the sleigh paths in shape, but during the day they would thaw. We therefore took to going to work at midnight and returning at noon. At night the woods were full of camp fires and noises, and the faces of the men looked strange.

Three of us worked together: Kleiman, a Jew from Pinsk, the Georgian Chikavani, and myself. The Georgians, with their mildness and composure, have a way of bearing themselves with the dignity and pride of an ancient culture. My friend Chikavani had all these traits. He had already served three years, and there remained more than he was able to stand.

Spring took its course, the roads were flooded, and we were cut off from communication with the outside world. The delivery of parcels had been discontinued in March. In May, in order to get some food, I sold the last pair of pants which I had brought from home. I walked about in quilted trousers of government issue and also slept in them without undressing. In May we were transferred from the forest for work in a "quarry." We worked on something like an island, surrounded by water from the swampy lowland. We walked to work over planks laid across the puddles and, losing our balance, would often fall into the water.

On June 10, 1941, in the early morning, a snowstorm struck the camp. The sharp, biting wind and the snow made work impossible. We built camp fires, as we did in the winter. There was no shelter to be found. The men sat in a stupor, benumbed and listless, huddling and downcast, like starved mares under mats. There was not enough room around the camp fires. Behind those seated near the fire there was a second row standing and stretching their hands in ragged, torn mittens towards the fire. We had become a new kind of fireworshipper. The snow kept falling, covering us, and there was nothing left for us to do but wait. The snow will pass, but we will remain. And the day will pass, but we will remain. The whole camp will pass. . . .

The 10th of June was recognized as a non-workday, and the rations were figured on the basis of the previous day's output. We walked in the thick fog along the railroad ties towards the watch-towers of the prison camp, and I caught sight of a prisoner who lay on the wet ground, his legs tucked under him and his arms spread apart, with his head propped up against a stone. He was as wet as the ground on which he lay exhausted. He was not afraid of the dampness. He knew that all the rains of the summer and autumn would fall upon him. And we, the entire squad, without disturbing his "rest" and without uttering a word, one after another simply stepped over him as if he were a log, and went on. The last one to step over him was the guard with his rifle on a leather strap.

We lived in a kingdom where everything was topsy-turvy. Hungry invalids loaded rotten potatoes into torn sacks. Here the illiterates were "educating" the educated. Criminals had charge of the innocent. The healthy made the sick ones work. Snow fell in June. Millions of people were at the mercy of the bloodhounds guarding them. . . . To get here one need not have committed a crime; but the mere sojourn in this place sufficed in itself to convert anyone into a criminal.

The mad masquerade would begin early in the morning: everyone was rushing to work: chauffeurs to fell timber, violinists to peel potatoes, bakers to cut hair, barbers to carry water, intellectuals to dig ditches. In the evening they would check what had been done and they would find that it wasn't any good. They would then do everything all over: the next day the violinists would fell the trees, the intellectuals would carry water, and so on.

The camp was called a "corrective labor camp." But the men who had gone through it carried away with them an aversion for manual work which stayed with them for life, and a consummate skill in dodging the conscientious carrying out of any task.

In the fourth year of my imprisonment in the camp I procured from someone a copy of Dostoyevsky's "House of the Dead." I read excerpts from the book to my prison neighbors: they laughed . . . and envied. I read to them the description of the prison hospital: "The sick prisoner usually took along as much money and bread as he could, because on that day he could not expect to receive his ration. He also

brought a tiny pipe and a bag of tobacco and flints, carefully hiding these things in the leg of his boots. . . ." Here my listeners interrupted. "They had tobacco," one said enviously, "and they hid it in their *boots!*" Everyone laughed—in a Soviet camp boots are a luxury enjoyed by very few. It was apparent that in the *katorga* described by Dostoyevsky the men were properly fed and were not worked to death. From the point of view of a Soviet prisoner who is normally in the last stages of exhaustion, all other matters were not so important. Finally, the old-time prisoners in those days were sure to regain their freedom on the expiration of their terms, while one of the worst features of Soviet camps is the absence of this certainty up to the very last moment of one's imprisonment.

Barrack No. 5

IT WAS in 1945, and the war was drawing to an end.

Month after month I lay on a cot, forgotten by the whole world, and watched people dying. Here there was no war, and yet a great carnage surrounded me. Under its shroud of snow, the "Fifth Barrack" of the Kotlas Transfer Point reminded me of a ship sailing the sea to an unknown destination. Waves crashed around the ship and in the hold there stirred a mass of human bodies. A monstrous murder machine had been brought into being on Russia's vast expanses, a machine that ground up human "refuse" and every day discharged the remnants into the Kotlas hospital barracks.

On the cot next to mine lay the dying Vassya. He was a boy of twenty, with a twenty year sentence. He died of laryngeal tuberculosis, never realizing, up to his last moments, the danger of his illness or even its nature. He did not understand why the other patients in the barrack turned away from him, forbidding him to sit on their cots and refusing to lend him anything. He thought they despised him, did not want to know him. "There is only one decent man in the barrack—it's you, Margolin," he would say to me plaintively, hurt by the general boycott. I did not boycott him and took no precautions, drinking from his cup and sitting on his cot. I was not afraid of contagion or death. On the contrary, death at the time seemed an almost welcome liberation from slavery.

When Vassya began to rattle and suffocate, it was already known in the barrack who was to inherit his cot. He was still in his agony when the usual pilfering of the dying man's belongings began. His few pitiful things were stolen from his table. The medic took his bread, untouched for the past two days. Nothing was left, and after he was carried out, I finished his last portion of gruel grown cold since the previous evening at the bottom of his clay bowl, and took for myself the chipped and dented tin cup we had used together.

Many of the patients had alimentary dystrophy, which often led to dropsy. At first a man's legs swelled enormously. Then his abdomen became distended like a pregnant woman's. The entire body filled with water, the eyelids became puffed, and when the water reached the heart, the sick man died. In the barrack there were several patients whose abdomens were periodically pumped. The sick man would sit on a chair in the middle of the ward, his abdomen was pierced and a tube inserted, through which the water poured out. It poured for a long time, into a basin, and then the nurse measured it in liters. Sometimes there was as much as fifteen liters. After that the patient felt relieved and could rest for another two weeks, until the next pumping operation. Under these conditions, death was inevitable.

The prisoners died quietly, meekly, submissively. None of the deaths shocked the other patients in the barrack as much as that of a certain Lithuanian who spent about four months in our ward. There were generally many Lithuanians at the camp; two waves of mass deportations from Lithuania converged there: the first, of 1941, before the war, and the second, of 1944, after the expulsion of the Germans and the recapture of the country. Lithuanians were dying in every barrack of the Kotlas Transfer Point. This one was a railroad worker from Kaunas, a middle-aged man, giving the impression of a peaceful citizen. He was still quite strong and usually volunteered to help bathe the other patients during the clean-ups. He was extremely taciturn and bore himself with a kind of phelgmatic dignity. Sometimes he woke at night and sat down by the stove to smoke (during the day smoking in the barrack was strictly forbidden), after which he returned to his cot without a word to anyone. His death took us all by surprise. He swelled up suddenly and died after a few days of unspeakable agony. His death

was devoid of all dignity—he screamed in an unexpectedly high, childish voice, filling the whole barrack with his suffering. Others became silent before dying but this man did the reverse; all winter he had been quiet, withdrawn into himself—and in his last hours he began to yell. All day he was delirious, shouting and singing. He sang before his death, he died with songs. I can still hear his cry:

"Lietuvata mana! Lietuvata mana! Lietuvata mana!"

The Lithuanians in our barrack told me what it meant: "My Lithuania, my Lithuania!" The intensity of the dying man's longing for his native land awakened echoes in all of us, and many remembered that they too had a homeland, that they, too, would perhaps never live to see it again.

ON THE first cot, near the entrance to the barrack, lay Father Seraphim. He was over seventy and looked like a biblical patriarch, with a broad white beard and long gray hair to his shoulders, plaited into a thin pigtail on one side so that it would not get in his way. Father Seraphim was an archimandrite and the prior of a Moscow church. He had been unable to get along with the regime and was sent to camp after the government's new policy of leniency towards the church had gone into effect. At the investigation he was asked why he had prayed for the Tsar before the revolution but refused to pray for the members of the Politburo. Father Seraphim replied that he was willing to pray for them if they would come to church.

Twice a day, morning and evening, the archimandrite rose and prayed, his face to the wall. Father Seraphim prayed alone but he prayed for everybody. At Easter, when he received a package from home with Easter cake, he divided it among all the patients in the ward, each receiving a tiny piece. On that occasion I had a talk with him about the Holy Land. He had visited Palestine in 1902 and remembered the country through a pious mist—holy places, monasteries, churches, donkeys on mountain paths, the fish he had eaten on the shores of the Gennesaret Lake. I remembered it differently: asphalt and benzine, concrete and the dark greenery of the plantations, tractors and electric stations.

Father Seraphim had a little golden cross. He had been given the cross by the doctor, who had gotten it from a dying patient. This

patient also had not brought the cross to the camp, but had taken it from the neck of his dying neighbor. Thus, the golden cross was the property of the entire barrack and was worn by its most worthy inmate, while the doctor, who was himself a Jew, was its guardian, having been chosen by fate to pass it on from hand to hand. This cross was the golden link of an invisible chain. Father Seraphim was not its last wearer, but kept it for a time—a very short time. The archimandrite died in the autumn of 1945.

Fifteen men died in the barrack that winter. This means that the annual mortality for the Fifth Barrack may be set at thirty, and for the whole Kotlas Transfer Point—a very conservative estimate—at 300 persons. Let us halve this figure—150 persons. Let us say that prisoners die in the Soviet Union in only five thousand camps. This gives us three quarters of a million victims a year at the most conservative, the most cautious estimate. The actual number is probably much higher. These figures give an idea of what we mean when we call the Soviet camps one of the largest death factories in the history of the world.

I escaped death in the winter of 1944 by the merest chance. In the spring of 1945 I was so weakened by the many months of lying in bed that I had forgotten how to walk. To teach the inmates of the Fifth Barrack to use their legs, the camp authorities introduced an obligatory fifteen-minute walk in the fresh air every day. We were reluctant to go, and they often had to lift us forcibly from our cots.

Conclusions

EVERY DAY at dawn—five A.M. in the summer and six A.M. in winter—the morning whistle is blown in thousands of Soviet camps scattered over the vast expanses from the Arctic Ocean to the Chinese border, from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean. A tremor passes across millions of human bodies. Many dear and close friends wake at that moment, friends I shall probably never see again. The millions that awaken to the sound of that whistle are as isolated from the world as if they lived on another planet.

I left them behind a long time ago. I live in a different world, in a beautiful city on the shore of the Mediterranean. I can sleep late, I am not checked morning and evening, and there is enough food on

my table. But every morning at five I open my eyes and live through a moment of fright. It is a habit formed during the five years of my life in camp. Every morning I hear again the signal from that world:

"Get up!"

And at that moment I feel very keenly that it would be unforgivable not to write about the camps, to keep silent about them, for they involve millions of suffering people whom it is the world's duty to help. My words are as much "anti-Soviet propaganda" as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* a hundred years ago was "propaganda" against the South.

The conditions in which the millions of Soviet prisoners are kept are far worse, and the degree of their moral oppression and physical exploitation is incomparably greater than anything that was done to the Negroes of slavery times.

I speak of "millions." Can it be true? At the "48th Square" there were 1,050 prisoners. It was a camp of medium size. A very careful and conservative computation which I made on the basis of information received from hundreds of prisoners with whom I talked at the various transfer points permits me to assert that at the time of my imprisonment there were in the U.S.S.R. *at least* 10,000 *"lagpunkts"* (camp units) similar to the "48th Square." This would mean that the total "population" of all the camps would be from 10,000,000 to 11,000,000.

Every one of us must learn the truth. A political adherent of communism or a fellow-traveler is *doubly* obligated to discover what goes on behind the scene in the Soviet Union. If he has the slightest doubt, he should demand to be granted the opportunity to verify every assertion about the Soviet camps that has been made by ex-prisoners who have written about them. I am not writing for those who consider every criticism of the Soviet Union "vile impudence," who want to suppress every cry of pain of the victims. I write for those who want to know what goes on behind the smokescreen of lying official propaganda.

I have written these lines, as I have written my book, for the sake of the millions of suffering people who are buried alive in Soviet camps. For the sake of those who are still alive today, but may be dead tomorrow. For the sake of those who are still free today, but tomorrow may share the fate of those who are buried alive.

ON THE basis of five years of experience, I assert that the Soviet Government, utilizing specific territorial and political conditions, has created in its country an underground hell, a kingdom of slaves behind barbed wire which is impervious to world public opinion.

The Soviet Government has used its unlimited power over a sixth of the earth to re-create slavery in a new form, and is keeping millions of its subjects and masses of foreigners in this slavery—not for actual crimes, but as a "prophylactic measure" used at the discretion and the will of the secret police.

I call the attention of men capable not only of seeing but also of foresight and thought, to the ominous fact that slavery, incompatible with the capitalist order and the moral consciousness of mature mankind, becomes technically possible and economically feasible within the framework of the totalitarian ideology of the twentieth century.

The modern technique of oppression makes it possible for totalitarian governments to discount completely the resistance of their people and to wholly disregard the economic laws of capitalist society. Slavery is again profitable—both politically and economically. Hitler demonstrated one version of rule based on the enslavement of "inferior races" and weak nations, a stupid and irrational version. Those who want to know the real nature of the Soviet version, no less cynical, though more cunning and perfected, should demand an opportunity to see the millions of Soviet slaves. Let the doors of the camps be flung open to men of independent science and free thought! Let them enter not as prisoners, under convoy, with sentences of ten years at forced labor, but as the ambassadors of nations, as free students and observers—for a great and impartial investigation!

The living conditions created by the Soviet Government for its two hundred million citizens are in sharp contradiction to the most elementary needs of the bodies and spirits of ninety per cent of the population. As a result, the Soviet people harbor an ineradicable resentment. This resentment renews itself despite all purges and prophylactic imprisonments with the same inevitability as a man's hair and nails do after cutting. For people who express in any way their discontent and their critical attitude—or even who are deemed capable of expressing them at some future time—the Soviet Government has created an unprecedented state of slavery, unequalled in the history of the world.

And if the "devil's advocates" will answer this by citing the facts of racial and national discrimination outside the Soviet Union, we must reply that these facts are not inherent in the nature of Western democracy and that their elimination will sooner or later mean the triumph of active and militant democracy, while the system of forced labor is a necessary and inseparable complement of the Soviet regime.

The Soviet camps clearly show how inadequate are all attempts to label the Soviet system as either "progressive" or "reactionary." Soviet camps are not reactionary—there was never anything like them in the past. Their organization is neither a revival of the distant past, nor a continuation of any tradition. Compared to serfdom and slavery in every known form, they are something absolutely new. It requires the entire technical equipment of a great modern power to create conditions in a vast country whereby ten, fifteen, twenty million persons can seemingly vanish from the face of the earth and, unseen by anyone, lead the existence of robots and automatons in a ghostly and thoroughly artificial world. The Soviet reservoir of slave labor is the most fantastic product of man's evil will in thousands of years.

NO MATTER how we define the nature of democracy, its world must be visible from one end to the other. But where there are secret corners and forbidden zones, where something is carefully hidden from sight behind prison walls and camp fences, we may be sure that there is something rotten there.

What I have suffered in the Soviet Union is a nightmare. My first move on returning to Europe was to report my experience and to transmit the cry for help of people who are cut off from the world. But it was only here, among the free men of the West, that I understood the full depth of the misfortune of those who remain imprisoned. Beyond the barbed wire of the camps, I have encountered another stone wall built by cowardice and betrayal.

I have found that in certain circles, and precisely in those whose help is most essential, it is "considered improper" to speak aloud about certain things that take place in the Soviet Union. The topic is shocking. Time and time again I was told that only the enemies of progress and the allies of reaction criticize the Soviet Union. My book about Soviet

camp life was written under the silent but open disapproval of my acquaintances, and were it not for my personal experience and the force of convictions which I owe to five years in the camps, I might possibly have submitted to the collective suggestion, as do all the participants in the "conspiracy of silence."

A man's attitude towards the problem of the Soviet camps is to me today a touchstone of his decency, no less than his attitude towards anti-Semitism.

Are people who justify the Soviet camps, who say: "Let them sit there," or "perhaps it is not true," or simply "it is none of our business," really anti-fascists? To me it is clear that these people are helping to prepare another version of Hitler.

No better than these are the people who are ready to admit in private conversation that not all is right within the borders of the greatest police state in the world, but regard open protest and the least effort to exert pressure on the Soviet Government as inexpedient and dangerous. I understand the motives of these people. But the more I understand them, the less I like them. Their conduct is dictated by fear. They are weak.

Every crime that is committed in the world must be called by its name publicly and without fear. Otherwise it is impossible to fight it. No outrage against humanity should be permitted to remain anonymous and secret. The slogan of the weak—"Don't speak aloud! Don't call things by their names!" is a dishonest slogan. In a sense, it makes them accessories to the crime.

Editorial Note on the Author

Dr. Julius Margolin was born in Pinsk (White Russia, later Poland) in 1900, the son of a physician. He graduated from a "gymnasium" in Russia in 1921, studied philosophy at the University of Berlin from 1924 to 1928, and subsequently lived in Poland and Palestine. He was a student of philosophy and literature and a Zionist journalist. His published works include: *Notes on Pushkin,* (Prague, 1926), *The Basic Phenomena of International Consciousness* (Berlin, 1929), and *The Idea of Zionism* (Warsaw, 1939). The present article is part of a book written after his return from Russia where he was confined in forced labor camps from 1940 to 1945.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB recently edited a selection of Lord Acton's writings, "Essays on Freedom and Power." She is now at work on a full-length study of Lord Acton in relation to nineteenth century political thought.

BERT F. HOSELITZ is associate professor of social science at the University of Chicago. He is writing a book on the effects of the industrial revolution on traditional class attitudes.

HANNAH ARENDT is a writer on political and cultural subjects. Her article in this issue is part of a chapter from her forthcoming book, "A History of Totalitarianism," to be published soon by Houghton Mifflin.

PAUL KECSKEMETI is a social scientist on the staff of the Rand Research Corporation. He is at present editing a book of the unpublished papers of the sociologist, Karl Mannheim.

BEN HALPERN is the managing editor of the *Jewish Frontier,* a socialist Zionist monthly. His article is based on a recent visit to Israel.

SOLOMON M. SCHWARZ is now attached to the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research and has just completed a book on labor in the U.S.S.R.

Contributors—U.S.A.

Hannah Arendt
William E. Bohn
Alfred Braunthal
Jim Cork
David J. Dallin
Henry David
George Denicke
John Dewey
Louis Fischer
Nathan Glazer
Hayim Greenberg
Josef Guttman
Albert B. Halasi
Keith Hutchinson
Oscar Jaszi
Horace M. Kallen
Paul Kecskemeti
Paul Keri
Irving Kristol
Harry W. Laidler
Algernon Lee
Aaron Levenstein
Adolph Lowe
C. Wright Mills
Hans P. Weisen
Boris Nicolaevsky
James Rorty
Boris Sapir
J. Salwyn Schapiro
George N. Shuster
Solomon M. Schwarz
Hans Staudinger
Mark Starr
Norman Thomas
Oswald Garrison Villard
William Withers
Karl S. Wittfogel
W. S. Woytinsky
Freda Wunderlich

Editorial Sponsors

James B. Carey
Frank R. Crosswaith
David Dubinsky
Israel Feinberg
Adolph Held
Alexander Kahn
Jay Lovestone
Jacob Pat
Harry Rogoff
Rose Schneiderman
Matthew Woll
Charles S. Zimmerman

International

Angelica Balabanoff (Italy)
Leon Blum (France)
H. N. Brailsford (England)
Fenner Brockway (England)
Louis de Brouckere (Belgium)
George Dallas (England)
Charles Dumas (France)
Giuseppe Faravelli (Italy)
Prof. L. Hersch (Switzerland)
Bruno Kalnin (Sweden)
Benedict Kautsky (Switzerland)
Matteo Matteotti (Italy)
Paul Olberg (Sweden)
Erich Ollenhauer (Germany)
Giuseppe Saragat (Italy)
Kurt Schumacher (Germany)
Friedrich Stampfer (Germany)
Z. Topalovich (France)
Paolo Treves (Italy)
Zygmunt Zarembo (France)

Is Truman

Bringing Socialism to America?

(As McGraw-Hill and Fortune Magazine Insist)

Or is his 81st Congress doublecrossing Labor?

- **Is a new depression starting or will the recession level off?**
- **What will happen to labor's "fourth round" drive for wage increases and social security?**
- **Will there be Socialist unity in the United States?**
- **What role will the American Socalist movement play in the future?**
- **What is happening to the Socialist movements throughout the world?**
- **Are the Big Four heading for war?**

For provocative, authoritative, stimulating and clear-sighted answers read the SOCIALIST CALL, official organ of the Socialist Party, U.S.A. (Subscription rates: $1 for five months, $2 per year, $3 for two years).

(Tear off and mail)

SOCIALIST CALL,, 303 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

Here is my Subscription:

☐ $1—5 mo. ☐ $2—1 Year ☐ $3—2 Years

☐ Enclosed Find Check.

Name .....

Address ..... *Zone* .....

City ..... *State* .....